

HOME SERVICE;

OR,

SCENES AND CHARACTERS FROM LIFE,

AT

OUT AND HEAD QUARTERS.

BY

BENSON EARLE HILL,

AUTHOR OF "RECOLLECTIONS OF AN ARTILLERY OFFICER."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LONDON :
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TO GEORGE RAYMOND, ESQ.

Dear Friend !

You were one of my youth's gay acquaintance, on whose fidelity I had no claim.

Never did I possess the power of serving *you*, who have not needed the good offices which I should have felt every inclination to pay.

Standing the tests of time, absence, changed fortunes, *you* did not forget me, among your many more prosperous admirers ; but have invariably *proved* your zeal for my interests, your sympathy with my feelings.

I took you for a “ bright summer flutterer ” — you have been constant as the Robin, through frost and storm.

My natural mistake did you injustice, but I appreciate you now ; and confess the wisdom of those who selected; as an emblem of imperishable spirit, a creature stingless, soaring, devoted to the Beautiful, therefore inevitably a type of Truth.

With unflattering brotherhood of heart I inscribe to you these trivial fond records of our lang syne, wishing you many years of such happiness as you have oft bestowed on

Your ever grateful,

BENSON EARLE HILL.

Brompton,
February, 1839.

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HOME SERVICE.

CHAPTER I.

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WHEN first I ventured on the arduous character of Captain Plume, I knew not how I might pass muster at the reviews; but, accustomed to run the risk of being cut up, I marched forward; and now proceed, at the encouraging order of that ornament to the service, General Reader, who has already armed the "Artillery Officer" against defeat.

Seriously, in publishing my Recollections, I was resigned, in humble sincerity, to be decided by their fate, as to whether or no I should ever put forth a second series.

Honestly avowing my surprise at the praises bestowed on my first light sketches, by so many

a competent judge, whose personal acquaintance I do not enjoy, I assure those who have emboldened me to write on that they have also prompted me to *improve*; and, though the following scenes are neither warlike nor foreign, like their forerunners, I trust they will, for those very reasons, prove more full of *life*, and come more nearly *home* to the tastes and feelings of my countrymen.

Returning to England, from the Army of Occupation, in the spring of 1816, leave of absence had been granted me without hesitation, in consideration of my having been so long employed on active service. I hastened to rejoin my family in the neighbourhood of Bristol.

How eagerly did they listen to all my "moving accidents by flood and field!" and, though I had no crutch to shoulder, I did my possible to show how fields were won. Had my faithful Turner accompanied me home, I have little doubt that, with his aid, some miniature fortifications would have arisen in the garden, though I question if his matter-of-fact notions would have converted a pair of jack-boots into mortars, as so skilfully managed by that prince of military valets, James Butler.

Very few days had elapsed when our fireside party was increased by the visit of my friend

Prescott, by this time well known under the *nomme de théâtre* of Warde. Our meeting was of the most cordial character, and I was enabled to afford him news of his mother, having repeatedly visited her in Brussels. Warde impressed upon me how anxious he was that I should witness his performance, assuring me that I should perceive a considerable improvement since the days of our school-play. I embraced the earliest occasion of attending the theatre, and received great gratification from the talent he evinced, and the vast popularity he had obtained. He certainly held out to his friends at that time the promise of one day reaching the highest station in his profession.

I was glad, by way of respite from the relation of my adventures, so constantly required by my family, to occupy their attention by reading to them. Numerous works of sterling merit and absorbing interest had appeared during my absence from England, and a selection from these served to beguile many an evening.

• Amongst the books brought from Shircliffe's library, were two written by Brooke and Orton Smith, (brothers), and equal in knowledge of character to any production of their namesakes, James and Horace. I should, perhaps, be disposed to lay down a book, bearing as its author's name a John, Thomas, or Daniel Smith, but

eagerly peruse it, if I perceive that two of the family, with more promising appellations, had been concerned in it; the Smiths are, undoubtedly, most to be admired when they run in couples.

“Confound it, George!” said I to a younger brother of mine, “do leave off that eternal allusion of your’s, ‘When I was up the Mediterranean;’ it reminds me of an old purser I once had the misfortune of being condemned to meet every day for some weeks, who made it a point to prelude his tiresome relations with, ‘When I was in the Arches of Peligo.’ Do, my dear fellow, favour me now and then with some adventure unconnected with the everlasting Mediterranean.”

“Considering the spell I had of it, I think ’t is very natural I should talk about places and people I saw whilst I was up the ——.”

“There you go up, up, up! Well, I find it’s of no use; so to prevent my being bored to death, I shall leave you to yourself, and try to forget that such a sea exists, by ascertaining how Leigh Woods and St. Vincent’s Rocks look ’neath the moonlight.”

Saying this, I drew on my gloves, took my hat and stick, and was about to go forth, in search of the picturesque, preferring the English scenes, of whose beauties I could have “ocular proof,” to

the "foreign wonders" known but by hearsay. This might be a very unclassical taste; but, be it remembered, that a reefer's prosings may disenchant the most attractive theme. A lady bard, of course, may reiterate her praises on the "Mediterranean sea of blue," *ad libitum, ad infinitum*, and never once cry, *Have patience, good people!* A knock at the door arrested my intention.

"Now who the deuce can this be? Eight o'clock in the evening is no hour for paying visits; and *I* know no one who would think of intruding unasked."

"I expect an old shipmate of mine," replied George. "I asked him to come and take a glass of grog with me, and talk over old times, when we were both up the —."

"Two from *up* that accursed sea!" cried I. "Human fortitude could not endure such an infliction. Moonlight and solitude for me!"

The servant announced Lieutenant Luce; and instead of a marine monster which I had anticipated, he proved a school-fellow whom I had not seen for years, whose ingenuous appearance was any thing but unprepossessing. After heartily shaking the proffered hand of my brother, he turned to me, and, with a slight reserve in his manner, said:—

"I suppose you hardly recollect me. I was

but a very little chap when you left home for the army."

I hastened to assure him of my perfect remembrance, and anxiously inquired for his elder brother, Tom, who had been my chosen associate and constant playmate. The very name of my dear companion brought back so many recollections, that I felt I should be paying the memory of lang syne but an ill compliment in quitting the house whilst the brother of my friend paid it a visit; so, putting my Bicknell and ground-ash in a corner, I resolved to stay at home, and do my possible to make the young sailor welcome. Wine was produced, but grog was to be the order of the night, consequently—

" Whiskey, brandy, gin, and rum,
And baccy (to) puff away,"

were paraded. It was evident that my observation had somewhat cowed Master George, for Portsdown Fair, the Blue Posts, Gosport Theatre, Ivy Bridge, Lisbon, and Cadiz, were the subjects that occupied these blue jackets; at last Gibraltar was named.

"Now," thought I, "they touch the verge of all I hate: if once they pass the Rock I'm a lost man!"

It *was* passed; for, after seeing his messmate's

glass supplied, and replenishing his own tumbler, my brother began thus :—

“Do you remember, William, the time that Admiral Pickmore sent me ashore at Minorca, to do duty as signal midshipman on the heights above Port Mahon? I must tell you what happened to me there. You need n’t fidget, Benson, you’ve never heard it.”

I lit a fresh cigar, leaned back in my chair, and resigned myself to my fate.

“The small party I had under my charge,” continued George, “occupied the house of a good-hearted native, whose principal support depended on the sale of his muttons; whether for meat or wool I do n’t remember, but I believe he disposed of both. I happened to be a great favourite of the old man’s, and many’s the glass of grog I have given him, in return for vegetables, and other things much more to my mind than the *aqua denta* our purser served us out for rum. One day the old Minorquen came to me with a long face, and, in a most doleful strain, told me that a fine young lamb, worth Lord knows how many dollars, had been carried off by a vulture, that lived in a large hole half way down the rock, and this was not the first time he had been so plundered. Compassionating the poor fellow’s tears, I asked if we couldn’t manage to destroy

this enemy of his ; he shook his head, and lamented the 'utter impossibility of catching the thief, or of killing him, as we were strictly forbidden to use fire-arms, unless for the purpose of alarm.

“One of my men coming up at the time, and seeing the *Senhor's* distress, I held a palaver with him on the subject ; he stated that the only chance there was of doing any good was watching the old birds' flight from their hiding-place, then descending by means of rope to the cave, and killing the young ones, which would perhaps have the effect of driving the parents from their present quarters.

“But this descent was not so easily managed, as the rock receded from the crest to the base nearly at an angle of twenty-two and a half ; so that when you were opposite the mouth of the cave, you were many feet from the entrance ; in short, the thing was deemed so dangerous and difficult that the consultation ended in my man's saying—

“‘Take my advice, Mr. George, don't you have nothing at all to do with it ; if the old Spaniard wants to kill the creturs, why—let him do it himself: he'll never catch 'em alive, if he had Lot's wife at hand to break up and throw at their tails.’

“All that night I thought of nothing but de-

stroying these formidable sheep-stealers, and my morning's resolution was that, at all events, I would make the attempt. Fearing opposition on the part of my countryman, I determined to let the old farmer into my secret. Tom Norton was to go down to Port Mahon next day for provisions, and I determined to take advantage of his absence for my descent.

"I provided myself with a cutlass, a large canvass biscuit-bag, to bag my birds if I took them, and a longish pole; there were plenty of serviceable ropes about the signal-house, so, selecting one thick enough for the purpose, I accompanied the owner of the lambs to the point of rock just over the cave, which I had often seen when laying off, giving him directions how to lower out the rope gradually from the place I had lashed it to, I got astride the noose I had made for my crutch, and slipped off the top of the rock as quietly as possible.

"I had calculated the number of fathoms I should want served out, and, after an easy descent, found myself opposite the abode of the vultures; true enough, I was at least fifteen feet from it, and to get inside it, for I saw it was large enough to hold half-a-dozen fellows, I began gently swinging backwards and forwards, 'fending myself off with the pole till I had got swing

enough to touch terra firma. Without much trouble I made 'good my footing. Entering the cave cautiously, I perceived that the large birds were out, leaving two young ones 'anxiously waiting for some fresh lamb-chops for breakfast.

"As I approached them they set up a loud cawing, and the strongest began to show fight. I gave him a douse over the head, which laid him on his beam-ends; the other brute seemed quiet enough, so I clapped him at once into my sack, and, with cutlass in hand, lest the old cock or hen should come home, 'launched myself out of this den of thieves. As soon as the rope hung straight I gave it a good strong shake, as a signal to be hauled up; finding that no notice was taken, I repeated it; still there I hung midway between sea and sky, expecting every moment to see the vultures return, who would soon have heard the call of their young one, for my friend in the bag squalled loudly enough. Minutes rolled on, and not the most trifling movement of the rope. I confess I began to grow alarmed."

"Alarmed!" said I; "why your bare description has turned me cold: but go on, for pity's sake!"

"You will allow that my situation was any thing but en'viable," continued the reefer: "an hour elapsed in this most painful suspense — for

so I may doubly call it. In vain I tried to surmise the cause of my being thus neglected, in vain I sung out as loud as my lungs would permit, all to no purpose. 'I hav' n't the power of description to relate half what I suffered. I tried to sing, then I prayed, then I cursed and swore, and vowed to thrash the old shepherd well as soon as I got up. 'But, shall I ever get up,' thought I; 'nobody knows where I am but the Senhor; perhaps he thinks that, if I hang here, the vultures will prefer my flesh to his mutton, and he will save his stock whilst there is a morsel of skin on my bones.' "

"A very consoling contemplation, truly!" remarked Luce, whilst George took a swig at his grog.

"At last my brain became bewildered, and I felt more than half disposed to end the insufferable anxiety I endured by freeing myself from the noose, and falling into the sea; nay, I even tried to disengage one leg, preparatory to my plunge, but my limbs had become benumbed, and that strange pain, arising from checked circulation, prevented my carrying my rash purpose into execution.

"Despair had utterly seized me, when, of a sudden, I found myself moving upward at an almost imperceptible rate; in a few minutes my

progress was much quickened, and, as I neared the rock, it was so rapid that I closed my eyes to prevent my quitting my hold from dizziness; the sound of human voices soon recalled me to my senses.

“Look out, Master George, and mind how you land! Don't leave go the rope till you're high and dry.”

“I obeyed, took a firm grip of the shelving rock, and, by dint of some exertion, soon found myself sprawling on the turf that crowned its crest. Tom Norton lifted me on my feet, and let fly a volley of angry words at the rash act I had committed, the dangers attending such fool-hardy practices, and the insufficiency of the cause to the undertaking.

“My precious eyes!” he exclaimed; “so, because that there old son of a Turk, that José, had lost some of his flock, you must run the risk of your life, you d—d young green-horn, to go and kill the birds, eh? a pretty to do, by —! Now I should like to know what the Admiral would have said to me, if you had been capsized, tail over tip, into the Mediterranean! I should never have heard the last of the jobation, for although, young gentleman, I'm under your command here, you must know that you are under my *care*, and a precious rumpus there would

have been aboard the flag-ship, if you had lost the number of your mess while I had the charge of you. Don't stand snivelling there, Don José, but go and ax' pardon for having sent Master George on such a fool's errand.'

"Hearing this, the old man rushed at me, caught me in his arms, and lavished numerous kisses upon my cheeks, his close contact nearly depriving me of breath, from the fumes of garlic with which his attempts to call upon the saints were accompanied. As soon as I could get clear of his clutches, I begged to know why he had suffered me to remain pendent so long; he attempted to explain, but his anxiety and agitation prevented my clearly understanding what he said.

"'Haul in your slack, *Senhor*,' said Tom; 'look here, youngster, this will show you why he couldn't bouse you up again; you see your swinging backward and forward upon this rope, strained taut over a sharpish bit of rock, has cut it through all butt a couple of strands; and as soon as the old chap saw the ticklish state of the line, he dared not pull at it, for fear that, in so doing, you might have given him the slip. All he could do was to sit down and cry, and call upon the Santissima Trinadada—not that I believe the old beggar ever had his foot aboard that craft

in his life; and there I found him, when I come up from Port Mahon, beating his breast, and counting his beads, whilst the tears ran down his cheeks as big as red cabbages for pickling! So, to get you out of your quandary, I laid myself down flat upon the ground, and worked myself close to the edge, old Spit-to-windward there holding on by my legs. I took a round turn of the rope, below where it was cut, upon my arm, and then he hauled me in, till I could have a fair pull upon the sound part, and here you are as safe as a diamond in cotton.' "

Here George took breath, and I could not but say — "I'll forgive all your past transgressions touching the Mediterranean; this story of your's has made ample amends."

"Avast!" cried the narrator; "I hav'n't quite done yet. By Jove, what Tom said was true enough, and my escape was marvellous; but I mollified the honest fellow's anger, when I produced my prize. After admiring the bird, he hastened to supply it with some undressed fresh beef, saying, 'You see, young gentleman, 'tis the nature of them varmint to take their dinners without troubling the cabouse.' The young vul-

* There is another story of vulture-catching extant, but in it the adventurous dangler nearly separates his own rope with his own cutlass, and, in terror at that perilous accident, becomes suddenly so gray, that he can never again sport his own hair.

ture grew up into a very fine bird, became much attached to me, and, when I was ordered home on sick leave, I gave him, not a very inappropriate present, to Sir Thomas Lewis, who commanded the *L'Aigle* frigate." *

"Well done, messmate," said Luce; "that yarn of your's deserves an extra allowance, so help yourself and pass the Jamaica, and I'll tell ye a sprec I had at Genoa, that is, if the soger officer isn't tired of our jaw."

"By no means," I replied; "besides, it would never do to let the reefer have all the talk to himself."

"Did you go ashore at Marseilles, George?" he commenced.

"No, I lost my chance; our ship was sent to Malta to take in troops."

"Beautiful place that Marseilles, by Jupiter! I was ashore often; then we went to Genoa, and such a shindy as there was the day the English soldiers took possession of the town, I do think never was equalled. All the blackguards of the place were up in arms to receive us, such hurrahing, such *viva*-ing, and *à bas l'Empereur*-ing! My

* I have often remarked that sailors scorn to be precise in naming ships of French christening, and have constantly heard *the* *L'Orient*, *the* *L'Etoile*, *the* *L'Ixion*, and *the* *L'Ardent*, thus prefixed by a plurality of articles.

Captain landed to communicate with the Commanding Officer, and he had ordered me and four or five hands from the barge to keep in his wake; well, just as we were crossing the square, such a hallaballoo was sung out by some of the natives, that I thought all the devils in H—— were out for a holiday. We followed the chaps into the *Masongvil*, as they call their Guildhall in foreign parts, and swamp my old shoes! if they didn't climb up to the place where the Judge or Mayor was in the habit of sitting, and knock a marble head of poor Boney right off his perch; down he came by the long run, and the scoundrels set up a yell enough to wake a deaf man.

“Most of 'em had sticks or clubs in their hands, and to work they were going, to break Mr. Nap's head into bits, when one of our Captains got astride of it, and by dint of a bit of bully, and throwing a handful of francs amongst the ragamuffins, carried his point; two of our lads, I think 'twas Bill Simmons and Joe Baber, helped him to secure the great man's nob, and shove off with it; the rascally turn-coat Genoese had given their Emperor a sliver over his chin, and spoiled the geometry of the face, and so, as a memento of the raw, I picked up the bits, and I have 'em safe enough in my chest to this day.”

In a moment a recollection rushed across me.

During my sojourn in Portsmouth, in 1814, I had enjoyed an intimacy with Captain Madden, and his charming family. Calling one morning, I found the Captain busily employed in placing a magnificent marble bust of Napoleon upon a pedestal of *scagliola*, which had been constructed for the express purpose. As soon as the head was fixed upon its new stand, I was requested to give my opinion of it as a work of art, and could not but speak in terms of the highest admiration, mingled with regret that a small portion of the chin had been knocked off. In reply to my question of how such accident had occurred, I heard from Captain Madden a more polished version of the story just related by the young Lieutenant. "Do you value these fragments very highly?" I demanded.

"Why, d'ye see, I've kept 'em by a good while, and I shouldn't like to part with them,"—then with the natural generosity of a sailor, he added, "except it was to oblige a friend, then I wouldn't mind—but they can be of no value to anybody but me."

I recounted what I have above stated, and my good-humoured friend not only promised that the fragments should be given to the owner of the bust, but, as he was going to Portsmouth in the course of a few days, he would take care to deliver them himself and see if they fitted.

I have every reason to believe that the broken chin of the Emperor was restored, after being "absent without leave" for six years.

This *par paranthèse*—to return.

Luce had reminded me of an anecdote.

"Ha," I said, "the effigies of mere conquerors might have felt resigned to rough familiarities, then and there, could they have been conscious of what befell Italy's most sacred individual in propria persona."

"D'ye mean in Genoa?" asked George.

"Yes, that's the English of it."

"I thought so; then do tell us, pray; let us have your share."

"Well, my story is short, but true. 'The Pius Pope, after escaping from the persecutions of his own children—I mean professors of his creed—signified his liberal and tolerant will and power to throw himself on the protection of our Protestant compatriots at Genoa. As soon as the when and by which road was known, the senior British officer of the garrison ordered a guard of honour to be in readiness, and, accompanied by a bevy of field and staff officers, rode out to receive the holy father. A French lady exclaimed, '*Le moine va voir son Papa.*' I don't know if you two have French enough about ye to be aware that one so named ought to be *au fait* at all monastic etiquettes.

It so happened, however, that Colonel L——, spite of his Norman origin, was a thorough John Bull; brave, kind, and gay, with ‘no nonsense about him.’

“As soon as Pius saw our military coming to welcome him, it is to be presumed that a struggle commenced in his breast, between gratitude and prejudice. He looked, we may suppose, with great respect at his own foot, all true Roman Catholics, he knew, would be but too blessed in kissing it. Yet, should he deign to put it forth, for the salute of heretic lips, it was just possible that they might not duly appreciate the designed condescension. He wished to conciliate the English by some act of grace unexampled in Popish annals; he would reduce himself to a level with the King of England—it was a sacrifice, but he *would* hang out his ungloved hand for the reverent touch of the noble commander approaching him. He did so. Jack L—— galloped to the carriage—he had not the excuse of Swift’s hero for not ‘taking off his hat,’ had he chanced to think such a ceremony at all needful; but, at the sight of that benevolent venerable face, our Colonel grasped the Pope’s pale withered fingers, and *shook* them heartily, as he all but shouted in English—

“‘How d’ye do, my dear old gentleman? very

glad to see you! welcome to Genoa! You've been damned ill-used; but 'never mind! we'll take care of you, we'll make you jolly and comfortable. God bless your old heart!"

"And all this while was he shaking and squeezing the hand of his Holiness the Pope; nay, what is stranger still, Pius, who understood a little of our language, was not at all offended."

"Why should he?" asked George, simply; "he was the obliged party, and, I'm sure, if the Colonel had been his own son, he couldn't have treated him more respectfully."

"But, my dear fellow, the Pope!—a heretic even to touch the end of his little finger——"

"Much pleasanter than his great toe."

In short, it was in vain that I urged the piquancy of my tale, the dignity of a Pope's little finger — I could not make these sailors *see the point!*

Before bidding his old shipmate good night, the lieutenant expressed his hope that ere long they might be afloat together; and did not appear to be in any way gratified when my brother told him that he intended to change the colour of his cloth, and turn "soger officer."

CHAPTER II.

LONDON LIONS—BREACH OF TACT—CREDULITY—WOOLWICH—
 BARLOW—DAIRY OF CAMELS—PUN FROM THE PYRAMIDS—
 THE ROYAL BRIDE—SHORNCLIFFE—LAWLESS ORNITHOLOGY
 —A GAY PROPOSAL—DOVER—THE SHAFT—COLONEL FORD'S
 ROAD—MILITARY EXPEDITION.

THAT George might know something of his intended profession, I invited him to pass some time with me in barracks, and, that we might see a few sights of London on our way, left home the middle of June.

Of course the theatres were our great objects of attraction. The divine O'Neil was then in her zenith of popularity, and Belvidera, as performed by her, could not fail to make impression on hearts so young as our's. We were also among the hundreds who vainly essayed to effect an entrance to the Panorama of the Battle of Waterloo, upon the anniversary of that day of glory. Soon afterwards, however, we were more fortunate; and, although the details of the fight were very confusedly represented, the fidelity with

which the field and its surrounding landscape were depicted reflected great credit upon the artist. Some of the portraits, too, were strikingly like; especially that of the gallant Sir Felton Harvey.

To avoid the expense of living at an hotel, I had persuaded a friend of mine to suffer us to join his family as boarders. He had lost a leg in the naval service, and now held office at Somerset House. I remember being somewhat annoyed at a solecism which my brother committed. Returning from a long walk, and being too tired to ascend to his bed-room, he, with the utmost gravity, asked our excellent host if he could accommodate him with a "*pair of slippers.*"

"Would to God I could!" he ejaculated, and thrust forward the wooden evidence of his incapacity so to oblige.

A brother clerk of T——'s was our fellow boarder; this person, from his official duties requiring his presence at an early hour, (for London) did not indulge himself with a glimpse even of the two or three newspapers usually found on our breakfast table; but, whilst taking his tea, muffin, egg, or what not, would ask me if there was any thing new stirring. On one occasion, not having observed any subject worthy of detailing, I drew upon my invention for the first

improbability that presented itself, and appeared to read the astounding intelligence from the pages of the journal. I saw that my good friend swallowed my information with as much case as he did his hyson, and expected that he would not apply to me again when he detected the silly trick I had played him.

What then was my surprize when, as seated over our wine, he seriously related, upon the authority of a man high in power, who had visited his office in the course of the morning, the identical fabrication I dished up at breakfast, but with minute details attached, that proved his inventive powers far superior to my own. It was impossible to resist the pleasure of repeating this innocent hoax upon my too credulous hearer, and, strange to say, the more improbable the fiction I gave him in the morning, the more astounding the particulars with which he would garnish my tale in the evening; sometimes, however, so entirely altering its main point as to place me in danger of betraying myself by laughter. One instance of this kind shall suffice.

“Nothing new stirring, nry dear sir?” the unvarying question.

“Why, no, unless there be any truth in the report that, in order to humour the mob, the statue of Charles I. is to be removed from Char-

ing Cross, and that of George Washington erected in its place."

"Washington!" repeated the newsmonger, "I forget who he was."

"The great American general, and republican president," said I.

"Oh, true, to be sure, King Charles to be taken down, to make room for him? a very suspicious rumour, indeed, Captain."

"Ah, but it may not be authentic——"

"That we shall soon know. Good morning, sir."

At dinner this gentleman appeared thoughtful, and, on being asked the cause, replied—

"Really, sir, I heard something just before I left my desk—and from a Tory — by no means a *croaker* by nature—you understand—excuse my punning! I was astonished—You who have victoriously fought against the Yankees will be outrageous, sir—orders are issued from certain quarters—to humour brother Jonathan by immediately pulling down Charles II. in 'Leicester Square, and, in his stead, putting up an effigy of General Wolfe!"

This was a glorious perversion of the author's meaning—certes, though one of those who, according to the proverb, "should have good memories," my apocryphal acquaintance's confusion

of materials was a vast improvement on the art of playing the *lyre*.*

Six years had flown since I had left Woolwich, and I devoted a day to the purpose of paying it a visit. Many familiar faces were there to greet me, and amongst them one who had been unremitting in his attentions to me when I first joined the regiment. With what mingled sensations do I record the name of Edward Barlow ! how my eyes fill, and my heart beats, at thy recollection—dear lost friend ! But I have no right to anticipate.

Barlow, with his usual hospitality, invited me to his table ; it was his wont to absent himself, now and then, from the mess, and surround himself, in his well furnished quarters, by two or three congenial souls, who were sure of partaking of fare the most *récherché*, for he was a gastronome of first-rate calibre, and a gourmand of no mean capacity. The creature comforts did not, however, constitute his all of wealth ; an extensive library of valuable and rare books, a museum of natural curiosities, of considerable pretension, and numerous folios of engravings, embracing a complete set of the works of Gilray, were sources of amusement both to himself and his visitors.

He was, indeed, a man of weight, standing six-feet-four in his shoes, of just proportions, and

weighing then about five-and-twenty stone. He was one to whom every body must look up, and nobody could call a slight acquaintance; yet he was graceful and active, both as an equestrian and a dancer. He was blest with a sharp and ready wit, and launched forth his jokes against friends or foes with the same gusto.

Amongst those whom he had invited to meet me was a surgeon of our's, whose irritability of temper had been constantly and kindly lectured by Barlow. In the course of our wine-and-walnut chat, the Doctor, speaking of the sufferings our poor fellows had endured in Egypt, from the want of pure water, added that *he* had escaped the misery attendant on severe thirst, by a very simple expedient.

"Taking advantage," said he, "of some milch camels, employed to carry the hospital stores, every morning of my life I obliged my damned lazy rascal of a servant to make whey for me."

"Egad," said Barlow, "whether at home or abroad, I never saw a servant of your's who was *not* obliged to make *way* for you!"

The evening previous to our departure for the coast, we visited Covent Garden, with the double inducement of seeing the Princess Charlotte, and Mrs. Siddons; the latter performing Queen Catherine, at the express desire of her Royal

Highness ; as it was generally believed that this surpassing actress would not again grace the stage, I hope I may escape the charge of disloyalty when I say that she was to me an object of far greater interest than England's Hope. Both the Kembles performed in Henry VIII. Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm of the audience on this splendid night, nor can I omit to mention that, on the Lord Chamberlain's repeating the lines craftily introduced by the Poet, in honour of his Royal Mistress,

“and who knows yet,

“ But from this lady may proceed a gem,

“ To lighten all this Isle ?”

the plaudits were most vehement ; the Princess, then supposed to be in a hopeful way, instead of shrinking abashed at this passage, rose from her seat, and acknowledged the application of the text to herself, by two or three very gracious, but very ungraceful courtesies.

I duly attended muster at Shorncliffe, the first of July ; after which ceremony I strolled down to Sandgate, to see if any changes had occurred in its appearance since I had left it, two years before. A few more fishermen's huts had arisen, and some girls, whom I had last seen in pinafores, now bloomed forth in early womanhood. Many of my old acquaintance, in the Rifle Brigade,

were stationed at the barracks. I also found that my kind and veracious friend, Mr. Wellwood, was in the enjoyment of perfect health, and as much devoted to his favourite branch of Toxophilism as ever.

The re-occupation of my old quarters, the very room I formerly held, produced a strange sensation ; an almost belief that the events which had occurred since I quitted it were but those of a dream. Not a single change of any feature, either in the landscape or the building, had occurred to mark my absence ; there stood the martello towers, there grazed the sheep. I would not prosify this visionary mood by wondering if they were the *same* I had left behind ; they might have been so, with no disparagement to the tenderness of their mutton. There walked the old lame shepherd, who could tell you the history of every regiment that had occupied the barracks since their construction, and, at the same hour as of yore, passed by farmer Jefferies to his club at Folkstone, where he diurnally expended fourpence, and returned to his house, under Cæsar's camp. Sometimes I could hardly persuade myself that I had twice crossed the vast Atlantic, visited fair France, dimly seen across the Straits from my windows, and lost, by the casualties of war, many a friend whose presence had once gladdened the walls by which I was environed.

I was standing one morning at my window, looking on the strange and beautiful variety of colours by which the sea was marked, as it lay before me, smooth as a polished mirror, when a fellow, in the ordinary dress of a fisherman, approached me, and said—

“If you’re in want of a few canaries, I’ve got some of the finest you ever looked on, both for colour and quality.”

“No, thank you, my friend, I’m not fond of caged birds.”

“May be, you’d prefer a piece of Gay’s?”

“Certainly,” thought I, “any one of the fables that make birds talk epigrams, rather than the actual noise of their wordless song. What do you know about Gay?” I asked.

“What do I know? I think I ought to know something, considering the hundreds that have passed through my hands; but do you let me show you some canaries!”

“You don’t mean to say you carry them about you?”

“Lord bless ’e, yes! only let me inside, and I’ll soon convince you of that.”

Without waiting for consent he entered my room, and my poetical bird-fancier, *supposed*, produced from under his jacket a set of yellow handkerchiefs.

“There, I call them as pretty a lot of canaries as ever you see, and here,” he added, drawing out another bundle from the opposite side, “are some Gays,” meaning kerchiefs of various colours.

These were indeed “Counterband,” as dear old Fawcett invariably pronounced the word, and, pretending to be shocked at this open defiance of the revenue laws, I told the man I never dealt with smugglers, desiring him to put away the tempting goods; this he did with reluctance, and, in a very off-hand manner, said—

“You’ve got a nice barrack up here, Muster. I was looking all over it a night or two ago. That’s a tidyish bit of ground at the back with the high walls round it.”

“Do you mean,” said I, “the square in the rear? that is to be converted into a vegetable garden for the men.”

“I wish you would let me be your tenant for a month or two. I’d pay you a pretty sight more money than ever you’ll get for cabbages. I wouldn’t mind giving at the rate of ten guineas a month, and take it just as it is.”

“What possible use could you make of it?” said I, curious to know how he could realize enough to pay a rent so enormous.

“Why, bless your heart, those heaps of loose

earth are just the thing for my purpose. I had a couple of hundred tubs buried there only last Friday week, and, if you'll let the ground to me, you shall never want either Moonshine, Bandanas, or any fancy dry goods from t'other side, as long as I'm your tenant."

"You must be a great fool, my friend, as well as a great rogue," I observed, "to make such a boast, and to think of such an offer to me. I thank you, however, for the information I have so strangely obtained, and will take care to have a sentry posted over that place, to prevent its being made the receptacle for smuggled goods. The sooner you leave the Cliff the better for you, as I shall inform the Preventive Service officers of your tricks before I dine. Never let me catch you selling canaries here again, or you will find yourself in Maidstone jail before you are aware of it."

The fellow, evidently alarmed at my serious manner, wisely withdrew.

In the middle of the month an unexpected order arrived for the removal of my company to Dover. Satisfied as I was with my present quarters, still, as I knew very little about the place of my destination, I was not sorry to have the prospect before me of exploring new scenes. The weather being intensely hot, we marched at an

early hour in the morning, and, after toiling up the precipitous hill beyond Folkestone, inhaled the fresh breezes from off the sea, which, like "the Doctor" in the West Indies, gave us renewed strength and animation.

By keeping close to the edge of the cliffs we reached Archcliffe Fort, without entering the town, at the eastern extremity of which this fort commanded extensive views of the harbour, and the small bay terminated by Shakespeare's Cliffe.

To my extreme gratification I found Colonel Ford, of whom I have made mention in my first series, still occupying his old quarters there. This gave me hopes of improving my acquaintance with him; they were soon realized, his well-known hospitality being constantly shown in my favour.

Amongst the wonders of Dover, which I had not seen on previous visits, was the Shaft, or triple staircase, forming a communication with the Heights, and entered from below by a long gallery, excavated in the base of the cliff. I lost no time in viewing this extraordinary specimen of military ingenuity, and was amply repaid for the labour attending its ascent, by the splendid view obtained from the summit. It will scarcely be believed, though I can vouch for the fact, that a butcher of Sandwich, for the trifling wager of

ten pounds, undertook to ride his pony up and down this corkscrew staircase, and won his bet, at the expense of the flaps of his coat, and the knees of his unmentionables, rubbed off in the undertaking. Had the poor animal made one false step the slayer of beeves would never have known when he reached the bottom.

A curious circumstance, connected with the construction of the range of barracks which I now saw for the first time, deserves mention.

During the threatened invasion, the number of troops assembled at Dover were far greater than the means of accommodation; the inns and private houses were obliged to supply quarters at a great inconvenience; to obviate this evil, the officers of the Barrack-board visited Dover, and fixed upon the site for some extensive buildings. Colonel Ford, as the commanding Engineer, was sent for, and asked, by the president of the board, how long it would be before the required erection could be commenced; the first step towards it being the construction of a road from the citadel, where the bricks were deposited, to the spot agreed on.

Before answering this question, the Colonel wished to know if, as soon as the road was complete, the buildings were to proceed; he was answered in the affirmative, and the majority of the

members agreeing that a month must perforce elapse ere the first brick could be laid, requested the Engineer to begin the work as soon after that period as possible. The Colonel bowed and withdrew.

On reaching his home an orderly was despatched, requiring the immediate attendance of the officers of the *Corps de Genie*. They assembled ; but, before they were apprized of the duty on which they were about to be employed, were regaled with an excellent repast.

“Boys,” said the Colonel, “we must work till night-fall, so take your dinners now, and then for the Heights !”

Before dark the line of the intended road was picketed out ; at day-break the next morning a strong fatigue party were in full operation ; by twelve o'clock P. M. the road was completed, and a train of carts, carrying bricks, seen upon it. The officers of the Barrack-board were astonished, and the zealous Colonel delighted at their surprise.

CHAPTER III.

MAXWELL — THE IRISH REBELLION — AN INCIDENT IN NINETY EIGHT — AN UNJUST STEWARD — TREACHERY DEFEATED — L'ESPRIT DE BILLET — A CHRISTMAS LARDER — DELICATE BENEVOLENCE.

PASSING through London, in November, I encountered my Portsmouth acquaintance, Major Maxwell; and, as there existed on my part rather a serious claim upon his purse for sums disbursed for his son and himself, I hoped that our accidental *rencontre* would lead to a settlement.

The fascinating Major appeared rejoiced at seeing me, gave me a pressing invitation to call upon him, and, without absolutely referring to such vulgar things as pounds, shillings, and pence, implied that he much wished for half an hour's conversation with me, on *business*; the last word, significantly emphasized, gave me positive hopes of repayment, and I agreed to call upon him the next day. I found him at home, living at a splendid house, in Manchester Street;

a lady was introduced as Mrs. Maxwell, who I knew had no right to that appellation. An elegantly served dinner, and some choice wine, spoke well for the state of finance, and I had little doubt but that he would be the first to broach the subject of our account current. The lady retired ; it was evident that now, left alone with me, *his* object was to talk on every subject but the one I most expected. France, Ireland, any place but Portsmouth was named, as recalling scenes in which he had been engaged. I shall select one out of the many stories which he told me, to beguile the evening, and ward off the dreaded theme.

During the Rebellion in Ireland, Major Maxwell was Brigade-Major to Lord Cavan. Long before the troubles began, his beautiful and elegant wife had joined him. No sooner did affairs assume a serious aspect, than she received an invitation to reside with the M'C——'s, a Protestant family, of great wealth and influence, possessing a seat near Derry. Mrs. Maxwell gladly availed herself of the comfort and protection thus proffered, whilst her husband was occupied in his military duties, which, day after day, became more arduous, from the reckless daring of the rebel forces.

A skirmish had taken place not far from the

town ; the King's troops were the victors, and some twenty or thirty prisoners had been taken ; these wretched and misguided men were brought in under a strong escort of yeomanry, and it was lamentable to observe the fierce passion and inveterate hate, to their better regulated brethren that they exhibited. The groupe was principally composed of men in the very summer of their days, full of life and robust health, clothed in tatters, with feet unconscious of covering, lacerated in their late conflict, hasty retreat, and the march to which they had been forced to submit.

Amongst them was a lad, about eighteen years old, whose dress bespoke him of a more respectable class than his associates ; his demeanour was also at variance with that of his fellows ; instead of the air of insolent scorn with which they viewed their captors, he marched amongst them the very image of despair, scarcely lifting his eyes from the ground, whilst his cheek, alternately deadly pale and flushed with the deepest crimson, gave evidence of the intense anguish he endured.

The prisoners were safely stowed, and the Major was on his way to Mr. M'C——'s, when suddenly his horse started at some object in the road. The shades of evening had fallen sufficiently to prevent his seeing the cause, but his

first impulse was to disengage a pistol from his holsters, and prepare for the worst.

“ Och then, for the love of Jasus, don’t shoot, Major dear, but harken to what I have to say ! There’s life and death upon it ; ’tis not from meself that you’ll larn the truth, but from one dearer to me than me heart’s core. Och, Major, darling, did you obsarve the poor prisoners that the army brought in ? did you notice one of them, the finest lad that ever blissed a fond mother’s eyes ? and he now in jail, and the grief chokin me as I spake of it.”

Here the wretched mother burst into a flood of tears, and wrung her hands, with that impassioned air and mournful sound usual to the Irish in affliction. The Major, accustomed to hear such lamentations, oftentime from *hired* mourners, was about to ride on, when the woman, seizing the bridle, exclaimed,—

“ Och then, turn your horse’s head towards Derry, make at once for the jail, and order Ned Farrell to be brought before you ; but, for the love of the Saints, do it quietly ; don’t let his comrades know that you have call to him, or his blood will flow by their hands, fettered though they be. My son it was who sent me after you. ‘ Mother dear,’ says he, ‘ would you risk a thrifle to save me ? ’ ‘ Would I vally my own life or

salvation for your sake, Ned?’ says I. ‘Mighty well,’ says he, ‘and thank ye,—folly the Major—he may take you for an impostor, and if my party guessed your interfarence you’ll not be safe; so have a care, and tell him *I* have that to say will be worth the while of his listening; but to no human soul save himself will I spake, and when the Orangeman’s rope has been round me neck, why then it will be too late for the both of us.’ ’Tis no lie I’m telling you, sir; take my advice, and ride back without delay!’

There was an earnestness in the woman’s manner so intense that Maxwell yielded to her desire, and, in a short time, reached the prison. The lad he wished to see was easily distinguished from his fellows, and the officer of the guard arranged that he should be brought to the keeper’s room without exciting the observation of the other prisoners. On entering the chamber he bowed to the Major, and, approaching him, said, in an under tone—

“I beg pardon, sir, for me bouldness, but before I spake on the business that brought you, we must be alone.”

Maxwell signified the boy’s wish to the officer and the gaoler—they retired. The moment the door was closed Ned began:—

“You’ve seen my mother?”

“I have.”

“Her heart is breakin at the thought of my fate; ’tis more for her sake, nor my own, that I wish to have my life spared. If you will get Lord Cavan to grant me a free pardon, why then I’ll tell you how to presarve them that is dearest to you from certain destruction, and a cruel death. Let me have his lordship’s own hand and sale to it, and you’ll bless the hour that you listened to me mother’s entreaty — ’tis for you to chuse—save *my* life, and that of the unborn babe wid its lovely mother—let *me* hang, and they will soon fill a bloody grave.”

Maxwell did not hesitate for a moment; leaving directions that Farrell should remain where he was till his return, he hastened to Lord Cavan, and speedily procured permission to make terms with the rebel.

The face of Farrell was pale, and his frame much agitated, on the re-entrance of the Major.

“Am I saved?” he eagerly demanded.

“Listen,” said Maxwell; “if what you are about to communicate prove true, and is the means of preserving the lives of those to whom you have alluded, I have the guarantee of your pardon; but if you have invented any falsehood to mislead me, hanged you will be, as sure as that you were taken in arms against your rightful sovereign. So attempt not to deceive either

yourself or me ; upon your own words your life depends."

"Enough," said the prisoner. "You know O'Dwyer, butler to Mr. M'C——, at the big house?"

"I do."

"Mighty well, then — next Friday night, by the blessing—no, I don't mane that—next Friday night O'Dwyer intends to let in the boys, and I needn't say, if he does, not a living soul in the house will be saved. You may well stare, Major, but it's the truth I'm telling, as you'll know yourself, if you go cleverly to work. I have no more to say. Saturday morning I shall expect you with my relase in your hand."

As soon as this brief conference was ended, the Major retraced his steps, and shortly reached his destination.

He cautiously apprized Mr. M'C—— of what he had so strangely learnt.

"Impossible!" exclaimed the listener ; "'tis a vile fabrication. O'Dwyer has lived with me from childhood. I'd stake my life upon his honesty and affection."

"It will be easy to ascertain if he be the honest creature you suppose," said the Major ; "but in this affair I implore you to be guided by my advice, and suffer me to arrange matters

so as to be prepared for the threatened danger. Precautionary measures can do no harm."

Mr. M'C——, confident of his servant's devotion to him, yielded, at length, an unwilling consent.

On Friday; *the* Friday named by the captive, O'Dwyer was sent to Derry with a large sum of money, and directions to purchase such a variety of articles that the execution of his commissions must necessarily detain him till late in the day. As soon as he was gone, Maxwell contrived to get into the house, by small parties of two and three at a time, some twenty infantry soldiers; these were smuggled in, unseen by the servants or the family, and secreted in his wife's room; she being, with the exception of M'C——, the only person aware of the circumstances connected with such measures.

In the evening O'Dwyer returned, and handed over receipts for the various disbursements. This confirmed the confidence in his integrity which his kind-hearted master felt for him. After expressing his satisfaction at the punctuality and zeal displayed, Mr. M'C—— inquired of O'Dwyer if he had brought any news.

"Nothing, your honor, but the défaté of the Croppies; the murdering thieves have been beaten right and left, and the town jail is full of the vil-

lians ; high hanging to the blackguards, saving your presence, your honor ! Sure it's well that none of the vagybones ever took it into their heads to pay this house a visit."

" If they did, you would show fight in the good cause, would you not, O'Dwyer ? " asked his master.

" 'Pon my conscience then, sir," replied the butler, with an air of great simplicity, " Irish as I am, I was never too fond of fighting when I was young, and now it's pace I'm for entirely, for good ating has burdened my years with fat and laziness ; but may be I could still be of use, comforting the misthress, and taking care of the darlints, not to spake of the friends staying with you. The heart of me you'd find *was* in the cause, tho' my arum may be waker nor it was years ago, master dear ! "

The old gentleman poured him out a glass of wine, and O'Dwyer taking it, continued, " May the Madara shoke me, sir, if I'd not lay down my life for the family ! " ;

" I believe you, my good O'Dwyer," said his master ; " and yet —— "

" And yet," interrupted the Major, perceiving that the incredulous M'C—— was on the point of recounting the accusation against his man ; " and yet there can be no harm in our taking the

usual precautions ; so, finish your wine, get your supper, and don't sit up to let me out ; I mean to stay here to-night, as all appears likely to be quiet in town."

" 'Tis to be hoped, and in country too, Major. Good night, and sound rest to both your honors !" said O'Dwyer, as he retired.

For many years it had been the custom of the house for the butler to lock the hall-door, and retain possession of the key till morning. The mansion, in which the events I am endeavouring to record occurred, was an old-fashioned building, having a wide staircase, with spacious galleries, (or, as they are termed in Ireland, "lobbies,") communicating with the various floors.

On the first of these lobbies Maxwell had, a few minutes before midnight, quietly posted his small party of Infantry, so as to command the hall-door ; the men being directed to crouch behind the antique and massive balustrades. This had scarcely been effected, when O'Dwyer appeared, carrying a dark-lantern, the light of which enabled Maxwell to trace his every movement—he crept cautiously round the hall—listened—with stealthy pace he soon reached the door, and, ere he applied the key, shook his clenched hand with a threatening action in the direction of his master's sleeping apartment—the key was to the lock—Maxwell whispered—

“Up, men, and present!”

The door opened, and instantly a body of about thirty rebels rushed in with a hellish yell — they made their way towards the stair-foot.

“Now, lads, fire!”

The house shook with the volley. Screams, groans, curses, and the noise of retreating steps followed —

“Load, and be ready,” said the Major; “lights there!”

A man, left for the purpose, brought candles. Maxwell hastened down stairs, to ascertain the effect of the musketry, a reception the intruders very little expected. Four men lay dead, two were severely wounded; the traitor O'Dwyer, who had been the chief contriver of this harm, had received a ball in his forehead; the lantern which he carried serving to direct the aim by which he fell. Leaving half the soldiers in the hall, the Major led the others round the house and adjacent shrubberies, but the rest of the scoundrels had fled.

On his return, Maxwell found his wife and Mr. M'C ——— actively engaged in quieting the alarms of the family. In answer to M'C ———'s inquiry, as to the fate of the miscreant O'Dwyer, he led him to the spot where the body lay, the countenance awfully distorted. The kind-hearted

master burst into tears at the sight of his intended assassin, and, with more of mercy than justice, exclaimed :—

“ May the Lord, in his goodness, forgive you, O'Dwyer, for the evil you contemplated against your indulgent master !”

“ Rather thank Heaven, sir, that the villain has been overtaken in his treachery, and the lives of the innocent spared,” remarked Maxwell, somewhat irritated at the misplaced compassion of his host.

O'Dwyer's crime seemed, indeed, gratuitous ; for, though himself a Papist, he had never obtruded one difference of opinion on his heretic patron, and would certainly have gained less by plundering than by sparing the liberal Mr. M'C——.

The soldiers remained on the *qui vive* all night. The proper authorities visited the house the next day, and congratulated the family on their happy escape from so base and villanous an attack. The bodies were removed, and the house cleared from the stains of rebel blood.

Faithful to his promise, Maxwell hastened to the jail with the order for Farrell's release. The mother of the boy was seated on the pavement opposite the prison-door, and seeing the Major arrive, said to him :—

“ May the Heavens smile on you for evermore,

if 'tis my son you are going to give back to the widdy that's lonesome; but, och! lose no time in letting him out. I have a car beyant the town, and we must be many miles from this before night; deep oaths are sworn to have the life of him that told the secret of last night's attack. Hurry, Major, and the blessings of the fond mother be on you!"

A few minutes sufficed to restore Ned Farrell to his doting parent, and Maxwell could not but applaud the intention of the woman to remove her son from the immediate scene of his conscientious breach of faith.

But Farrell was not destined to escape so easily from the hate of his late associates. In a lonely part of the road the car was beset by four ruffians, who, with their heavy bludgeons, beat the wretched lad till they felt assured his life was extinct. His poor mother, for many a long day, despaired of his recovery; she had, by means of a trusty friend, informed Maxwell of her son's dangerous state. The M'C——s afforded the sufferer medical aid, and supplied his home with comforts during the tardy period of his convalescence. He arose from his sick bed a reformed man. Protected by the M'C——s against any future outrage from the vindictive savages he had defeated, Ned Farrell prospered, and the sight of

his honest thankful face was some atonement to his benefactor for the misery of having gazed on such a spectacle as that of the ingrate unprincipled miscreant O'Dwyer.

Thus ended the Major's story, and, interesting as it proved to me, I wish, for the credit of his cloth, he had evinced as much "punctuality" as conversational talent, but the Major did not like that paying back !

During a visit which I again paid to my family that winter, nothing of interest occurred, save the marriage of my friend Warde, and the accession of Mr. H. Kemble to our theatrical company. His wife was my old acquaintance, but, had she not been so, I should not then, never have lost an opportunity of paying whatever attentions lay in my power to any scion of that race, to which public talent and private worth alike attached me. The son of Stephen found my house his home ; he had been highly educated, and was, at that time, living very domestically. • Uncongeniality of habits subsequently broke off our intimacy. But peace be with him !

As a proof what strange ideals of etiquette are formed by rural recluses, I must transcribe a brief lesson in the epistolatory style, which, about this period, reached me, from a romantic dowager • the pink-edged, trophy-stamped, silky, per-

fumed, and motto-sealed *billet*, bore these lines, traced in a neat crow-quill hand—

“ Mrs. W——, having a *presentiment* that Mr. Hill intends favouring her with a visit this day, announces that her hour for chocolate is from one till two.”

The desire of my sailor brother to turn soldier was gratified; he purchased an Ensigncy, and left us to join his regiment at Fermoy.

Calling upon a friend at the Bush Tavern, towards the latter end of December, I could not but observe that its present proprietor was anxious to maintain the reputation which had for years been attached to the larder of this hotel. Excellent as the fare usually was throughout the year, at Christmas the house was so famed for its collection of luxuries as to attract the attention of hundreds for many miles round.

I am tempted here to relate an anecdote connected with its former landlord.

Jack Weeks was as good a man as ever sat behind a bar; hospitable, charitable, patriotic; and Christmas week was to him a period of pride and gratification. Satisfied that no similar establishment could exhibit such an array of “dainty dishes” as his, having thus amply catered for the rich, he turned his thoughts to the poor, and many an honest family blessed his

name, as the donor of their roast beef and plum-pudding.

On one of the returns of this festive season his head waiter, aware of his master's benevolence, informed him that he had more than once observed an elderly gentleman, who, from his dress and manner, he conjectured had seen better days, examine many of the eatables with a longing eye, and retire without saying a word. Weeks, happy at having a fresh opportunity of doing good, desired Thomas to be on the look-out for the stranger, and directed him how to act.

The next day, Thomas having kept vigilant watch, perceived the unknown, who was at the moment handling, with the air of a *connoisseur*, some very fine woodcocks; the old gentleman was respectfully invited to walk into the coffee-room, a basin of turtle was speedily placed before him, and Thomas said —

“ My master, sir, keeps open house at this time of year ; let me beg you will try if this soup is to your liking.”

After some little pause, he continued —

“ Mr. Weeks hopes you will not be offended, but he bids me to say, he should be very sorry it a respectable man, like you, had not a good dinner on Christmas-day; and you will do him a great favour by accepting this ;” and honest

Thomas insinuated a guinea into the hand of the stranger. He stared at so unexpected a proceeding, and, for a moment, his brow was clouded; but, speedily regaining his placidity, he said —

“Tell Mr. Weeks, with my compliments, that I duly appreciate his intended kindness; but I am not in want of a dinner or a guinea, as I shall be happy to prove to him, if he will favour me with a visit in London. I am easily found there — my name is Coutts.”

And the *Millionaire*, returning the proffered boon, with a guinea from his own purse, walked out of the room before the astonished waiter could muster any words of apology for the mistake of which he had been guilty.

CHAPTER IV.

GENTLEMEN AMATEURS—THE ARAB GREEN-GROCEK—A CRUEL
 TURK—IRISH ARGUMENT—POLITIC JUSTICE—CHARLTON
 PLACE—THE KING'S COUSIN—REHEARSAL—THE BUMPKINS
 —MASCULINE LANDLADY—PATRICIAN AUDIENCE—REFORM-
 ED COSTUMES—HIGH-WAYS AND BY-WAYS—KELLY AND
 O'NEIL—A JEWEL OF A DRAMATIST—WEST AND LATHIERE
 —MAIDEN FEARS—CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

RETURNING to Dover, on the first of January, 1817, I found the walls of the town covered with placards, announcing that the manager of the theatre, Mr. Copeland, was about to have a benefit, under the patronage of some distinguished amateurs, who not only lent their interest on the occasion, but played for the worthy man.

My curiosity was excited, and, of course, I attended the representation, on the night in question. Maturin's tragedy of Bertram was selected for this display. The Robber Count was enacted by Mr. Foote, a gentleman of fortune, residing near Barham Downs, and devotedly attached to matter's theatrical; he read the part with good

emphasis and discretion, but there was a sad want of ease in his action.

The Prior of St. Anselm was performed by an elderly gentleman, named Dilnot, whose appearance was to me superlatively ridiculous, from the fact that, failing to receive the imitated Tonsure necessary for the character, he had substituted a closely fitting Welch wig (the small curls of which were well powdered), resembling that worn by his Majesty's coachman on state days. On the whole, however, the performance gave satisfaction, not only to the audience, but the *Beneficier*, whose pockets were filled by the attraction of the night. In the course of the evening I was introduced to the first tragedian, and, on expressing a hope that he would repeat his performance, was requested to join the corps of amateurs, who made his house the scene of their theatrical exhibitions.

All the world assembled on the 7th, at a splendid ball given by Mr. Fector, the banker, which afforded me an opportunity of being made known to many of the resident and neighbouring gentry.

I have already alluded to the hospitality of my neighbour, Colonel Ford ; it was from him I learnt what follows.

While serving in Egypt, he was one morning seated in his marquee, when he saw, drawing near, a miserable Arab, bestriding the hind-quarters of

an ass, which also carried a pair of large panniers, filled with garden esculents—acceptable, and somewhat rare commodities, at that time and place.

This purveyor of greens was jogging inoffensively along, looking out for purchasers, when his evil star sent him such a customer as he did not bargain for—a tall and powerful Turk, richly dressed, and armed to the teeth; who, without a word, dragged him from his seat, kicked the panniers off their bearer, “and spread his vegetable store” upon the sand. Pressing as this hero’s temporary necessity for a steed might be, it was probable that he would not have tolerated one so mean, but for the pleasure of tyrannically usurping the goods of a powerless inferior; yet, ere he had lifted his leg high enough to cross the animal, a dapper fellow, much below the ordinary size of soldiers, who had been cleaning his master’s belt close by, roared out—

“What d’ye mane by dat, ye hig blackguard? How dar ye maltrate the Arawbian, in his lawful calling? Let go his ass, or you’ll sup sorrow, my lad!”

The Mussulman, though he might not understand a word this champion of the injured poured forth, could neither mistake nor relish the hostile looks and menacing gestures of little Jemmy

Mullhollan, to whom, however, he only vouchsafed the mute and dignified hint of laying his hand on his dagger.

“Och, you murtherin’ thief! you mane that, do you?” cried Jemmy. “By all that’s holy, I’ll tache you manners!”

Then, springing upon the formidable persecutor, he wrenched the weapon from his hand, and flung it into the air.

“Hooroo!” shouted Jemmy, dancing with passion, and reiterating the wild exultant cry so frequently heard in an Irish *scrimmidge*.

The follower of Mahomet stood for a few moments utterly confounded by the suddenness and success of this attack; but, recovering his self-possession, prepared to draw a pistol from his girdle.

“Ye’re there, are ye, ould muslin cap? Bad ’cess to ye, but I’ll take the shine out of yez yet!” Saying this, Jemmy made a furious butt with his bull-head at the breast of the Moslem, which felled him to the earth, with “the boy” on top of him. As they rolled over each other in their prostrate scuffle, the active Hibernian absolutely abducted his foe’s pistols. In drawing the second from the folds of the shawl, it went off, and alarmed the guard; some of whom hastening to the spot, secured the combatants.

Mullhollan, spite his narrow escape from ball and blade, was unhurt; but the Turk had one eye "bunged-up;" while, on his nose, the fist of Erin had performed a diametrically contrasted operation, broaching its claret, by which a handsome vest was liberally stained. This was a ready-made-out strong case of assault and battery. The suffering party, addressing an officer, who had been led to the scene of action, insisted on seeing the Commander-in-Chief, to make complaint of the rough usage by which he had been insulted.

The poor Irish lad was conveyed to the guard-house; the Turk to Lord Hutchinson, on whom the command had devolved—

"When the brave Abercromby received his death-wound."

His lordship ordered the matter to be investigated; and Captain Ford, in detailing what he had witnessed, dwelt with pleasure on the humane impulse of the little Irish fighting-cock. Still the malignant and the turbaned Turk demanded the life of the offender in expiation.

It was the policy of Lord Hutchinson to treat the Ottomans and Mamelukes, who still hung about our camp, with every mark of respect: peculiar circumstances would have rendered it dangerous to refuse even this request.

A drum-head court-martial was assembled; Mullhollan's transgression fully proved; he was ordered for instant execution. The sentence being made known to the belaboured and vindictive infidel, he seemed appeased, though his satisfaction was somewhat qualified when he heard that "the regulations of the British army would not permit persons of an opposite faith to *witness* a punishment."

In about an hour a strong detachment was seen marching towards the sand-hills, in the rear of the camp; and, in the midst of this guard, the prisoner, who, to his honour be it spoken, seemed to bear his fate with extreme fortitude. As far as the soldiers would permit, the poor Arab followed on his donkey, wringing his hands, and wailing over this reward of his protector's brave good nature. Just ere Jemmy's escort turned this grateful creature back, the condemned man begged leave to speak with him—

"That is," added Jemmy, as his entreaty was granted, "to shake his brown hand; and pat his brown baste, in token that, if it war to do agin, I'd do that, and more, for an onlucky divil as couldn't help himself; and I don't mind what's come of it, at all, my man; so be aisy!"

The gallant bearing of the speaker reassured

the being to whose wrongs he was a victim, and they parted.

The appointed spot was soon gained ; the fatal volley fired. As it reached the ear of the maltreated Turk, he 'was seen to smile, and, with a heart full of gratified malice, hurried from the vicinity of the camp.

In a few minutes the soldiers returned ; when, in full regimentals, carrying his musket, and occupying the centre of the rear rank, *marched Jemmy Mullhollan !* who had lent himself to this exhibition of justice, and, for many a year after, would laugh over the story.

“ Shure I liked the fun of licking the long chap, and chating him after it. He was a bigger jackass than the ould cabbage-man’s own, if he thought my Lord would rob the sarvice of a lad like me, for all the Turks that ever wore whiskers. I tuk good care to keep shut of him ever after, for all that — as, if we had met, he’d have fallen out wid me for being alive, to a sartainty ; and the next shindy I had wid him, I might not have been let off so convanient. The Arawbian did twig me at last, and frightened enough he was ; but I tipped him summut handsum, not only to show I was no Fetch, but to make him hould his tongue.”

Before the month had elapsed I was favoured

by a call from Mr. Foote, who kindly invited me to visit him at my earliest leisure. I had seen him before under the disguise of theatrical costume, and was now much struck with his appearance. He was certainly a remarkably handsome man, of very polished manners; as graceful in private life as he was awkward upon the boards. I gladly accepted an invitation so flattering, and holding out a prospect of again enjoying my most favourite amusement.

Duty detained me from carrying my wishes into effect till the latter end of February, when, obtaining a few days' leave, I set off for Charlton Place. The lodge gates stood on the high Dover road, about midway across Barham Downs; an easy descent, through some fine young plantations, led to the house, which was a plain, old-fashioned mansion, with nothing remarkable in its architecture to attract attention. The grounds in its immediate neighbourhood were laid out in good taste, but the season was unfavourable, and no correct opinion could be formed of what the homestead must be in more genial weather.

I was cordially welcomed by my host, and speedily presented to his lady — a noble and elegant woman, with a somewhat reserved manner, but who speedily won all hearts by the fascinating dignity of her deportment. It was

impossible to be in the presence of Mrs. Foote, without feeling a deep respect for her, and this did not arise from the fact that, although the wife of a country gentleman, she was nearly related to the reigning family of England. Her mother's sister, the Countess of Waldegrave, having given her widowed hand to the Duke of Glo'ster, thus my fair hostess was second cousin to the Prince Regent.

After partaking of luncheon in the library, Mr. Foote led me to the portion of his house occasionally devoted to theatrical purposes; a more splendid room I have never entered; he had built this immense wing to the old mansion in order to support becomingly the office of High Sheriff of the county, which he had recently sustained, to the satisfaction of many, and the envy of more.

The newly erected drawing-room was of lofty proportions; the cornice, curtain ornaments, and carvings of the marble fire-places, exhibiting, most tastefully, that staple commodity of Kent, the picturesque hop. Ottomans occupied three sides of this spacious apartment, which was entered by a lofty and elaborately carved doorway; it was capable of containing four hundred people, and every way suitable for private theatricals.

The intended representation was, of course,

the all-absorbing subject of conversation. Two of the corps dramatique arrived, and were introduced to their new member; they were pressed to stay dinner, which invitation they gladly accepted, certain that, after a liberal allowance of wine, they should enjoy the happiness of a rehearsal; nor were they disappointed. The play proposed was "the Honey Moon," and, as the Duke, Duchess, Volante, Lampedo, Jaquez, and Balthazar, were assembled, several of the best scenes were gone through, to the infinite amusement of those concerned.

The next day a large party assembled, amongst whom were two officers of the Greys, whose names were highly appropriate to a cavalry regiment—Walker and Trotter.

I volunteered to paint a cottage scene for the comedy, which, on its completion, was much admired. Our Thespians having assembled in full force, a representation was given to about three hundred persons, consisting of the tenants, tradesmen, their families, and friends. The performance elicited vehement applause from many of the rustic spectators, the splendour of the Spanish dresses seemed to afford them more delight than the language of the author, and their applause was divided between "the Squire and Madam Foote," and Mr. Dilnot, who played the Hostess. The

feminine garb of this gentleman amused the clodpoles, who knew his sporting qualities, and the mincing gait he assumed strangely contrasted with the sturdy pace in which they were wont to see him perambulate his broad acres.

The farce of "Killing no Murder" failed to excite the risibility of the country-bred portion of the audience. It was cleverly acted, too, but they saw nothing to laugh at in Buskin or Belvi; they came prepared for some sanguinary piece of tragedy, like their favourite local drama of Arden of Feversham. All went well, however, and a capital supper was the crowning blessing, at which every man criticised his neighbour's portion of the night's performance, with much more satisfaction than he received the remarks bestowed upon his own exertions. •

It is a fact established amongst actors and authors, that the second night's performance of a new play is invariably a heavy affair. The excitement attending a first representation has evaporated, the 'spirits are lowered in consequence, and the exertions of the performers seen to disadvantage. We amateurs knew nothing of this, and, regarding our first essay to the *bourgeoises* in the light of a drest rehearsal, determined to shine forth with redoubled 'splendour on the following evening, devoted to the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood.

A brilliant assemblage congregated to witness our efforts ; the applause, though by no means so loud as on the preceding evening, was infinitely more judicious, and the clever farce of Hook's sent them to their carriages in the best possible humour. A very few of the guests remained after the performance, to partake of supper ; these were selected from the friends of the house, who would join in conversation almost exclusively devoted to theatrical matters.

Leaving Charlton Place, with my name regularly enrolled amongst its amateurs, I returned to Dover. A series of gay dinner-parties, given by the Magnates of the place, the Fectors, Lathams, Rices, Winthrops, Maules, *cum multis aliis*, occupied my evenings during the boisterous month of March. My leisure was devoted to the necessary preparations for receiving my sister Isabel as a visiter, and these being completed, I repaired to London to give her the meeting, and safe escort to her bachelor brother's quarters.

Independent of my rooted love of play-going, I had now the double inducement of gratifying my young charge. I hastened to show her the inside of my favourite temple of the Muses — Covent Garden. The play was *Cymbeline*. Young's Iachimo was a most finished representation. Booth enacted Posthumus. It was unlucky for

this handsome clever youth that he reminded us of a greater little man. The Keanites were ready to smother him in comparisons.

When Egerton said to the " princely boys " —

" Arise, my knights of battle !
Ye shall be made companions with ourself,"

I could not forbear exclaiming " K. C. B." My party took this kindly. I repaid them by an assurance that the drama before us, as well as *Lear*, would soon be represented in correct costume ; a plan at once instructive and economical. Each performer, male and female, instead of perspiring beneath finery, unknown to Albion's sons and daughters at those remote periods, would henceforth, like a true blue ancient Briton, exhibit an illuminated or emblazoned skin ; with birds, serpents, and full moons, azure, devoted to appropriate portions of the human frame divine. This improvement would render *Cymbeline* a pleasant comedy for *warm* weather, and suit the taste of the spinster, who dubbed what are usually voted unmentionables, indispensable " superfluities."

Robinson Crusoe was the Easter-piece that year. Its scenery and dresses almost realized the dreams of boyhood. Grimaldi was Friday. Emery, another true genius, shone in it, too. Both are gone now !

Our stay in London being limited, I determined to devote each evening to some *salle de spectacle* ; and, accordingly, we next repaired to Astley's. Ducrow, I remember, was a very graceful Demon, in steel armour ; and the supernatural effect of his vanishing through a wall, with the rapidity of lightning, was actually terrible. I knew nothing of whalebone traps, then novelties by the way.

An unexpected but most welcome visiter was announced early one morning, and I had again the satisfaction of shaking hands with my Valenciennes friend, Colley Grattan. He was not then literary ; that is, had not yet published, even as a poet, but blended a bashful humility, unusual to his countrymen, with a vast fund of Irish wit and originality. I can assert that Fame has reassured without spoiling him ; he takes a joke as kindly as ever.

A fair share of talent and agreeability graced our little coterie. After the first-named, the Representative of Ireland, came he of Scotland, truly called by his country-woman Mrs. Moore, on the great haggis day in 1815, "that gude creature Trotter ;" a fine creature, too, quoting Burns, and raving of his country's scenery. Then "St. George for merry England !" we had John William Cole, of the 21st Fusileers ; a travelled eccentric, "nothing if not critical," our best

actors with him were "awful;" our most popular authors "dire." He went to operas, *because* he hated music, that he might vapour forth: — "By all my fears, another song! that's illiberal!" A very brilliant companion did this fidgety fire-brand prove.

Drury Lane was next visited, and here I beheld for the first time a new order of sea; which tossed and rolled in "the Inn-keeper's Daughter;" an admirably got up melo-drama. Wallack won hearts by "bushels," in Richard, and Miss Kelly — *the* Kelly! but to name her is to praise. In those days she drew "tear for tear," if not house for house, with O'Neil herself. Ireland's Juliet had beauty, a delicious voice, and the language of Shakspeare, Otway, and Southern, to back her. Kelly lent her picturesque symmetry to the filling-up of mere sketches, the naturalizing and dignifying of dialogue often meagre, sometimes nonsensical. She had to brave personal dangers, not to speak of fatigues, from which man might have shrunk; but enthusiasm strung her sensitive nerves to the task, and her hearty feeling extorted sympathy even for the homeliest woes.

Talking of O'Neil reminds me of her usual hero, Charles Kemble; though then forty, he was a better Romeo than he had been in his youth, but not half so *good* a one as he subse-

quently became. He might be too tall for a boy-lover, too fair for a son of the South, but no one could read the whole character so finely ; while, in the chivalrous and philosophical scenes, he elicited admiration unqualified.

In one week I saw two plays narrowly escape perdition. A first night is always exciting ; contending parties make it doubly so. In the Conquest of Taranto, Young, who always became the Turban, was more than usually oriental, and saved the cause by "fainting dead away," to the very life. Booth stood next in favour, Macready still awaiting a fit opportunity for displaying the talents then but half divined even by his warmest votaries.

At the end of this "Conquest" the Christian and Pagan banners were raised together, with the words —

"Now let the cross and crescent wave in amity!"

The author, with his wonted *taste*, thus had joined two things, which *Heaven* decreed should *never* meet. A song by this dramatist, containing the lines :—

"Oh how sweet the water gushing,
In the thirsty Pilgrim's ear,"

(instead of his mouth), elicited some witty severities from the Editor of John Bull, on this

habit "of putting things in the wrong place." This dramatist has lately died the Great Unhanged.

Elphi Bey was the Drury Lane production, in which "Little Knight," through all his unchristian disguise, asserted himself our own country boy, as usual.

Nor were our mornings misspent. West's Christ Rejected and Lathiere's Judgment of Brutus were both visited. Gay colours and lovely faces won glory for the President (I was going to say of the United States). After witnessing the triumphs of the self-taught American, the *chef d'œuvre* of the Gallic artist at first looked too cold and classic; its figures statues, without statue beauty; but depth of feeling and purity of taste pervaded this Roman group. A toga, as if flung down in haste to spare the father's eye, concealed the decollated head, and all the inevitable horrors; another such hid the neck of the just executed son; the transparent pallor of the drained dangling limbs, one little smear on the edge of the axe, told all. Oh, what a red sea, what an ocean of "mulberry jam, have I seen served up on like occasions, by *some* painters! The hands of Brutus were tightly clenched; if he unclasped them it must be to embrace his yet surviving child; I could not join the multitude in

their petition for *his* life — 't was a chubby, light-haired lad, not worth the saving.

A fortnight devoted to sight-seeing soon fled ; it was now time to journey towards the coast. At the King's Head, Canterbury, where we alighted from our chaise for the night, was that "common thing" — a pretty chambermaid, (so called). She had long been conscious that I thought her — not an angel, but something far more to the purpose ; nor had I ever missed a kindly welcome from her till now. But, when I came accompanied by a young lady, the buxom *camariste* found "a change come o'er the spirit of her dream." The waiters, who stared sufficiently at my charge during dinner, I can imagine reported to "cha-maid" that, from the diffidence of the lady, and the fond attentions of the gentleman, they were sure this was the wedding-day.

When we sent for Maria she entered, with a look in which frigid respect contended with less amiable, less comfortable emotions.

"Oh, about beds," I began.

"You can have the best room, if you like, sir," half pouted the maid.

"No, show this lady beds as near together as possible."

"Umph ! we *have* a double chamber, sir," she answered, with somewhat decreasing pique.

“But we want two, close to one another.”

“Two *rooms*, sir?” she asked, brightening up apace; “*two*!”

“Yes. I do not usually lie in the same apartment with my sister.”

“*Sister*, sir!” she repeated, all smiles and curtesies; “God bless the dear Miss! to be sure, how silly I was not to see the likeness at a glance — so *very* young, and looks as if she enjoyed a bad state of health, too. Lord, captain! what a stupid ——! — this way, if you please, ma’am; your own brother? such a nice gentleman! you *shall* have two rooms that open into one another—*almost*.”

As it happened this diverted us both, but I can readily fancy that a *real* bride would neither have liked the gaze of the men, nor the *down* look of the maid.

Early next morning I led my sister to view the beauties of the cathedral; few buildings in England possess so many historical associations. The chapel in which the ambitious Becket received the blow that conferred upon him ‘the glory of martyrdom; his tomb, the steps leading to which are deeply indented by the knees of pilgrims; the sepulchre of the gallant Black Prince, the armour which he wore at Cressy hanging over it; the inscriptions on the altar, emblazoned on the back of

the same panelling which had served during the sanguinary reign of Mary; the rings placed in the pillars of the great aisle, where the steeds of Cromwell's cavalry were sacrilegiously stabled, the effigies of saints and fathers of the church, perforated with the bullets of his Roundhead traitors; these, and a thousand other memorable traces of times bye-gone, cannot be regarded but with interest.

A walk on the Dane John was proposed to warm our feet previous to commencing our journey. The numerous piles of hop-poles were novelties to my sister. I had seen them covered with a hoar frost, and, as the sun shone on their whiteness, they resembled tents, giving the effect of an encampment surrounding a beleaguered city.

A few hours drive brought us safe to Archcliffe Fort.

CHAPTER V.

ARCHCLIFFE FORT—MYSTERIOUS FEMALE—A WALKING WAREHOUSE—NERVOUS SHOCKS—SHAKSPEARE'S CLIFF—SMITH'S FOLLY—SEA FLOWERS—SIM FAIRFIELD—GAMING AND DRINKING—AMPHIBIOUS FATX PAS—FEMALE FORGIVENESS—CATCHING A BUCCANEER—A BLACK TIGER—PARENTAL FEARS—FAITHFUL SAGACITY—ROBBERY AND DESERTION—EXPOSURE—ORIGINAL EPISTLE.

MY quarters being now my sister's home, I must describe it as apparently a wing of the house, whose remainder was entirely occupied by Captain Scott of "our's," his wife, babes, and domestics. Colonel Ford's dwelling was detached ; no other officers shared the fort. I had thus a door and staircase as truly my own as if I had not been in barracks at all, with the military advantage* of sleeping surrounded by guards against all kinds of intrusion. My front portal opened into a large dining-room, within which was my dormitory, also bearing the aspect of a sitting apartment by day ; its window communicating, by low steps, outside and in, with the paddock. My sister had two rooms above.

Descending, one day, to a somewhat late breakfast, she found my 'sanctorum still locked, and, walking forth, saw that its blind was yet down; fearing me ill or lazy, she appealed to Turner for the cause of my invisibility.

"Whoy," he hesitated mysteriously, "it wouldn't do for *he* to let every body know his dealings with *she*. He's got a 'oman there, as comes some toimes on proyvut bizness, ye know."

His uninitiated hearer only knew me incapable, hitherto, of polluting *her* ahode with impure specimens of her sex, and thought her good opinion confirmed, as I tapped at the window, and peepingly beckoned her in. She entered without demur.

Mrs. Spearpoint, as I announced the female who stood beside me, though no girl, was neat and pretty *faced* enough to have been *kicked* out, ere she could explain her errand, by *some* of the Xantippes who call themselves the best and most lady-like of wives; though her pale and sharp features surmounted a figure suiting the round rubicund visage of a Wapping landlady. Yet "the creature's situation" was *not* evident to my sister's eye. Curtseying very low, all nods and winks, our guest began, "'Saryunt, Miss! Cappun says you're ready to swear—all upon—umph! and you doat upon—gunpowder; want a

card of—hush! to trim up your—snug? or make your—honour bright! with a packet of—hey? for that pretty little—mum! if you're fond—under the rose—got 'em long and short, smallest sized—French kids!”

The early part of this speech might have been unintelligible, but the *kids* brought to mind the *Canaries*, and Bell guessed that this lady's goods were about as like beasts as my gentleman's were like birds. The good dame, finding herself understood, began to rummage her dress, all pockets, pulling from the bosom gloves, laces, and silk stockings; from her front and nether woman pounds of tea, and bladders of brandy; thus “reducing her shapes,” and growing “monstrous thin,” like dear Colman's “ladies at the brick house.”

A soldier had one day taken a more summary method of tapping her dropsy, by mischievously sticking into her most prominent side, that at her back, not a spear point, but a bayonet's, letting the unconscious smug walk on, “dropping odours,” to the certain loss of her spirits, and the great risk of her craft's detection; about which she was as pitiably nervous as the broken-down lady, who, when set up as a cake woman, used to glide down by-lanes at night, feebly tinkling her bell, and murmuring under her

breath, "Muffins! I hope to Heaven nobody will hear me!"

Poor Spearpoint! the numerous and varied perils of her man, and the comparative cheapness of her irresistible commodities, made me her extensive customer, in spite of my conscience.

It was a source of great pleasure to me that my rooms were soon visited by very different persons from the fair one last mentioned. The wives, sisters, and daughters of my numerous circle of friends, civil and military, called on Isabel, as soon as her residence with me was known; novel guests in a bachelor's barrack!

Before I accompanied her to the house of one of the first families, I was obliged to apprise her that, on my introduction to the amiable, sensible, and lady-like matron we were about to visit, she had scarcely honoured me with her conversation for two minutes, when she went "off at the head" with a start, and a nasal inspiration, so violent and abrupt, that I imagined her seized with a sudden fit; no one else, however, seemed at all concerned at these symptoms. The gentlewoman herself, with equal good nature and good breeding, suffered my dismay to pass unnoticed; whereby I perceived that I ought to have done the same by her habitual nervous affection, which so frequently recurred that I soon grew accustomed to

it ; but 'tis cruel to both parties, in careless or partial friends, not to put strangers on their guard against such peculiarities.

I was once given a letter of introduction to a charming talented old maiden, never prepared for the fact that I should find her visage decked with so Nestor-like a beard, that, when she ate green pea-soup, she must have looked like a river-god.

The beauty of the spring weather we now enjoyed tempted us to many a long walk after the hours devoted to the pleasing duty of returning visits. Shakspeare's Cliff was the pilgrimage on one hand, and Smith's Folly on the other.

The first, stupendous as it still remains, must have lost a considerable portion of its altitude since the days of the Bard, and, certainly, much more since the time of Lear ; a fact easily ascertained by the immense quantity of chalk which has rolled down from its original station into the sea, forming almost a natural pier of some extent.

The building called Smith's Folly was situated at the eastern extremity of the Orange walk ; it was an eccentric pile of building, constructed, if I recollect rightly, under the direction of the father of Sir Sidney, the hero of Acre. The roofs of the several apartments were formed

of wood-work, representing boats, whilst the rooms they covered were low, ill-shaped, inconvenient, and, withal, unbearably hot in the summer, the only season for which this fantastic residence was constructed; a small ditch ran round the queerly shaped nest of rooms, whilst the pomp of a drawbridge and flag-post aided the general insignificance to remind one of the palaces of Lilliput.

Near this whimsical edifice grew, in great profusion and endless variety, those very lovely Zoophytes, called "Sea Anemones." The colours of these marine sensitive flowers were brilliant as those of their namesakes on earth, but the slightest touch would change their appearance, and leave nothing visible but a fleshy-looking excrescence, firmly attached to the rock. I made several experiments to ascertain if they would bear removal, taking large fragments of their bed home with me, and covering these lovely creations with sea-water; they certainly did once more shoot forth their hundred leaves, but this was only "a lightness before death," for, in a few hours, an odour exhaled from them so much more fishy than floral as to render their removal imperative.

The merry month of May was rendered worthy of its name by the frequent parties to which

we were invited. To the residence of Admiral and Mrs. Winthrop I always led my sister with delight. Dear Mrs. Winthrop, once known, could never be forgotten. She was a beauty, between the Siddons and the Catalani styles ; her every movement, grace ; her every accent, melody ; yet in manner so cordially unaffected, in dress so plainly rich, that, after a moment's gaze on her, it was difficult to treat half the fine ladies one met with common courtesy. She used to address her parent, the venerable Mrs. Farbrace, as " My mother." With little girls of her own she could not say " Mamma," nor would she obtrude the word *dear*, as a preface to that nobler name ; it was " My mother, shall I help you to this ?" " My mother, will you sit here ?" From such lips nothing sounded fantastic ; on the contrary, the phrase warmed one's heart.

Strolling on the pier, the usual lounge of the place, I encountered, one morning, early in June, my friend Fairfield, on his way to Paris ; although no longer living *en garçon*, I could not resist the pleasure of inviting Sim to share my dinner, which he cheerfully accepted ; and was in due form introduced to my sister. Fairfield still wished to be tolerated by ladies of character ; to such he could never have been dangerous, in spite of his exquisite singing and showy person ; for

his air was an unfailing antidote to all tender interest. The dashing swagger of his brawny figure, the vinous tint of his hirsute face, the impudent glitter of his eye, the bold prominence of his nose, and sensual fun of his full mouth, made him altogether brazen.

The more modest he tried to seem, the more he was suspected — detected — as a *roué*. On one occasion I chanced to ask him, before our female friends, if he had ever met some fair one, who, of course, I deemed virtuous, or should not have alluded to her, in such a presence; but Sim, with a twinkling leer, smacking his moist lips, cried—

“Met her? by Ja—by—by the bye, I—I—*waltzed* with her once!”

The significant way in which this was uttered set one wag of a girl off into an irrepressible laugh—on the rack she could not have told why. Perhaps (queer waltzer as he must have looked!) Fairfield meant no more than met the ear; nor do I record this as associating waltzing with one immoral idea, for I verily believe had he, with that mischievous wink, said—“I went to—*Church* with her,” the effect would have been the same.

“Sacred Dian! what *real* naughtinesses have I heard glide from *some* demure lips, uncensured,

though apt to make girls laugh o' t'other side their mouths.'

But to return to Simon. He appeared to be well satisfied with his fare, volunteered one of his best and most sentimental songs, before my sister left the table, and, with much ease, put a couple of bottles of port under his belt. It now drew near the hour named for the sailing of the packet to Boulogne, and Fairfield seemed so particularly anxious to cross the Channel, 'that I could not help inquiring if he had thought it *necessary* to leave London; he assured me that his only object for wishing to reach Paris was that he should find his favourite amusement, the Hazard table, in full operation there; whilst, during the summer, scarcely a *decent hell* was open in town. I regretted most sincerely that the vice of play had become so deeply rooted with my friend, but found argument or persuasion on the subject unavailing.

At his request I accompanied him to Podevin's, where his luggage had been deposited, and, finding that the tide was not sufficiently high for vessels sailing, he ordered a couple of glasses of negus, as he said—"For the good of the house." For myself I had taken quite enough wine, and therefore suffered the tumbler to remain untouched. Not so my companion; for, as if to

convince me that I had not entertained him with due hospitality, though his departure from the Fort was at his express desire, he drank glass after glass, swearing after the second that the next should be the last, until, to my utter astonishment at his extraordinary capacity, I found that he had swallowed *sixteen* tumblers of the seductive liquid.

Those who remember him will readily believe my assertion; and those who knew him not, must be pleased to receive it on faith.

Heartily rejoiced when the commissioner announced "Packet ready," I took leave of my wine-bibbing friend.

Visiting Ledger's library, the next morning, I found many of the quidnuncs in unusual good humour, particularly Mr. H—— L——; and ascertained that their merriment proceeded from an adventure which had occurred to his brother John, and which I cannot resist telling.

This young gentleman was a mighty swimmer before the Lord, and, by his brave humanity, had saved some lives; a godlike office, a divine sensation! but, *hélas!* the sublime grows near the ridiculous, and *the* false step from one to the other is facile as the descent into Hell.

One morning, just too late to bathe without a machine, rather too early, in the season, as in the

day, for lady dippers, Mr. John repaired to the shingly beach, took a machine, only one other was at work ; he made sure that it had been hired by his acquaintance, Mr. J——, who, the night before, had named his intention, adding, “ that he made it a rule to go into the *sea once a year*, for *cleantiness*’ sake.”

Well, John divested himself of all his raiment, and swam away, like a porpoise, till thoroughly tired ; then, turning round, struck out for his moveable tiring-room, and jumped into the wrong machine, presenting his denuded limbs *not* to the eyes of the *clean* Mr. J——, but to those of two flannel-gowned ladies !

For once ’twas any thing *but* rude for a gentleman to turn his back on such ; he dashed beneath his briny veil without a word, the shrieks of outraged decorum still ringing-*wet* in his ears ; but — hapless man ! at one glance he had recognized the ladies, and that recognition had been mutual ; yet apologies would only make bad worse. The trio, who then and there had met with such sudden briefness, and in such array, must meet again, in crowded halls, without reference to this event.

The most politic thing the fair ones could do was to appear unconscious, unconcerned, by no means cool to the unintentional intruder on their privacy ; besides — women, those “ only hypo-

crites deserving praise," are generous as well as artful. Can any costume, or no costume, in which a man has preserved his fellow creatures be unbecoming in their eyes? It is a fact to their honour that the athletic John had never been so great a favourite before with the ladies, as he was after that morning's mis-swim; nay, it was their opinion, that, when he died, he would not leave his equal behind.

Whether his supremacy was ever contested, or my amusement at the incident chastised, time will show.

On leaving the reading room, I was about to ask some question of the worthy proprietor, when an elderly gentleman, whose appearance bespoke a hale constitution, entered, and inquired if Mr. Ledger had a copy of Buchan's Domestic Medicine for sale.

"I have not," replied the obliging bookseller, "but will procure it for you, from London, by return of post, sir."

"You are very kind," returned the would-be customer, "but I wished to consult it this very day, on a matter of serious import to me. I am sorry to appear so troublesome, but do you think you could borrow a copy for me? I will leave treble its value in your hands, to insure its safe return — but I *do* wish, very much indeed, to see it to-day."

“ I have a copy, at your service, sir,” said Dr. Broadrip, stepping forward, “ and will send for it immediately ; let your boy run to my house, Ledger ! ”

“ Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you,” bowed the unknown.

The Doctor’s residence was within a few doors of the library, and the required volume was speedily procured. It was placed in the hands of the stranger, who, with a million of thanks, retired to peruse its contents. The moment he had quitted the shop, Mr. Ledger said :—

“ Doctor, I am surprised at *your* lending such a work—you, a physician, a regular practitioner, supplying the gentleman with a book with which he will perhaps cure himself, and rob you of a patient.”

“ You are mistaken, friend Ledger,” replied the Doctor, “ it was to insure a patient that I lent him Buchan ; he will, as he reads, persuade himself that he is labouring under half, if not all the diseases described, and will very shortly be obliged to consult me, on his newly-discovered maladies.”

The event proved the truth of the Doctor’s prediction. The stranger brought back the volume the next day, looking in a state of nervous excitement ; and, after sundry expressions

of gratitude to the lender, asked the librarian if he could recommend him to a physician, as he dreaded a serious illness. Ledger named Dr. Broadrip. The gentleman was delighted to find in his medical adviser the disinterested possessor of Buchan ; and many a golden guinea chinked in the purse of the prophetic Broadrip, from the hoards of this "*malade imaginaire*."

A very young Engineer officer, with a half-grown Newfoundland dog, I used frequently to meet upon the pier. The boy, with whom my acquaintance was then but slight, used to boast that "Tiger would drag any man down, if set on by his master, or carry any one's hat into the sea," or some such childish vaunt ; and, on one occasion, offered to convince me by personal experience of the brute's docility. I said something about being annoyed by *puppies*, and Whitmore, instead of retorting, frankly apologized ; we became excellent friends.

Whenever he visited my rooms, I expected him to bring Tiger, who came in for whatever bones, scraps, brose, or milk could be spared. He was, indeed, a whelp of the first water, and, when his master was ordered on foreign service, I volunteered taking care of the fine fellow, who would have been a heavy trouble and expense on march or voyage ; so the noble Islander slept in my

stable, and boarded with my servant, both rough diamonds, and so attached to each other, so mixed up in my ideas, that I once, having a drawing to mount, caught myself calling—

“Tiger, make me some fresh paste, for that rascal Turner has eaten the last cupful.”

“*I never touched it,*” retorted my man, with his peculiar dry laugh.

’Twas delightful to see the giant cub, conscious of his youth, but not of his size, strength, or weight, indulge in all the freaks of puppyhood, while his uncouth gambols upset every thing that stood in his way. He was an especial pet with the children of Colonel Ford. The youngest would bestride his black back, hold on by the *mane* and *tail*, and gallop round the paddock, till both steed and rider rolled together on the grass; but, on a hot day, Master Tiger returned from a ramble with the evidence of a recent fight—a severe wound above one fore paw.

The Colonel, a most affectionate father, saw nothing less than the certainty of canine madness for his whole brood, if this bitten dog remained one hour at liberty; nay, he could not be satisfied with his being chained up in the stable, he must be sent away. I was certainly better pleased with the prospect of giving poor Ti’ change of air, than I should have been at de-

priving him of his freedom ; and a gunner on whom I could depend starting that day for Deal, I tipped him well for my dog's keep, and packed them off together, till all danger should be over.

The nine days' wonder past, we heard of Tiger as being led to the sea, morn and evening ; at other times allowed the range of the battery, but not to go beyond it. Colonel Ford still begged that the creature's leave of absence should be extended ; one afternoon I was supplying Tiger's place, by acting horse for the youngsters, when a shout from the wicket made me start, and, in an instant, covered with chalky dust, poor Tiger leaped upon me, licking my face, wagging his tail, whining and barking, in all the ecstasies of return home.

The Colonel was again in alarm, but, though Tiger was mad with joy, no rabid animal ever frisked in that fashion. Thinking the best welcome home was an offer of something to drink, I instantly set a full bowl before him, and all fears of hydrophobia vanished with the water. The fact, as we afterwards learnt, was, that watching his first opportunity for escape, the affectionate fellow had ran back the ten miles, finding his way on a road he had never traversed but once before, and then in a cart at night.

It may be well supposed that Tiger was now

more the darling than before. Early in the morning I used to take him with me to a retired nook, among the cliffs, to the westward of the fort, and, tying my habiliments in a handkerchief, leave them on the beach, while I held by Tiger's tail, and was fairly towed out to sea. The great ruffian's delight was to pull the said tail from my grasp, saturate it well in salt water, and then whisk it into my mouth. I had borne this, on a certain day, till, half diverted, half provoked, I boxed his ears, crying impatiently, "Home, sir, go!" He obeyed, with the utmost alacrity; but with the most zealous care for my moveables. I had used him to fetch and carry; he now set up upon his own account; and, to my horror, I beheld him with my bundle in his mouth, taking a short cut, whither I could not have followed him, even had I been in fit trim to attempt it; but all I could do was to continue standing more than breast high in the waves, beckoning and shouting to our sentries for help, fearing every instant to be discovered in this unseemly pickle.

The devil of it was the tide was rapidly receding, so that I was obliged to step back with it, and should have expected to find myself "naked alive in the open air" at Calais, but that the cursed crabs, jealous of a rival retrograder,

kept nibbling at my lower fingers. I did not hope that they would leave enough of me to get half seas over, and was just crouching behind a lump of chalk, overgrown with sea-weed, when Turner, out of breath with speed and anxiety, came to my aid, with the needful for re-entering the fort.

He had thought me drowned. Tiger had arrived with the clothes, quite safe, but with a most injured-party aspect, as who should say—"Ay, for all he struck and scolded me, I've brought this heavy parcel home, on purpose to oblige him; and would do as much or more, at any time, to serve my master."

There was no being angry with his honest blunder, or with the bit of vindictive mischief which he so cleverly passed off for one.

Calling on the Quarter-Master-General one day, I found him busily engaged in despatching some official letters to London; as my visit was on a matter of duty, I awaited his leisure—my kind friend giving me his poudorous scrap-book to amuse me for the time. Colonel Marlay had been long employed at the Horse Guards, and enjoyed the personal notice of his Royal Highness the Duke of York. Among the remarkable documents which enriched the collection I now looked over, I discovered one which tickled my fancy amazingly.

Some epistolary genius had applied to the Commander-in-Chief for a commission, in favour of a relative, but omitted the aspirant's sponsorial appellation, which was required, with a promise of granting the request. The letter this query elicited was as follows.

“Honoured Sir,

“Touching the subject of my brother, whereon you have been graciously pleased to hear me, and in your benignity to gratify me too, without intending the least infraction on your philosophical time, so well bestowed for the welfare of human happiness, that his name is Thomas, and I do in the sincerity of my soul believe, that I shall continue to pray for the same as long as my name is

“Y—— Q——.”

CHAPTER VI.

A MARRIED MAN — LA' BELLE ADELE — FRENCH TRAGEDY —
 SOLDIER'S FUNERAL — EPHESIAN WIDOWHOOD — AN AIRY
 LECTURE — THE NEW LUMINARY — A SCOTCH HEROINE —
 THE PRICE OF THINGS — HAMBURGH — IMPORTANT LETTER —
 RECOGNITION — DETECTION — PENITENCE REWARDED — GOOD
 RESOLVES — DENOUEMENT — MORE HONESTY.

IN the beginning of July, my unloverlike soldier servant, with blushing hesitation, announced that he was going to be married.

"Then," said I, "Turner, you must quit me. I can neither give you leave, night and day, to visit your wife, nor have her about my quarters, with the prospect of squalling brats."

"Time enough to talk of that," pleaded he; "she's a respectable, quiet cretur, in sarvice here, and whoy shouldn't she be Miss's sarvunt, stead o' Sergeant Penson's woife, who can't sleep on the spot? You ax Mary's caritur, that's all."

He enabled me to do so; the result was satisfactory, and, on the 7th, the bride was brought

home. I am particular in the date, for a reason I have.

My sister and myself were seated, tête-à-tête after dinner, one day, when Turner entered abruptly, saying—

“ Here’s Sergeant Clarke’s wife says she must see you ! ”

Before I could oppose the entrance of (as I expected) some dowdy gunnecress, such a vision of beauty burst upon us as I can never forget. Dishevelled and in deshabelle as she was, Mars (not the God, but the actress) never looked more distinguée.

“ Oh, Monsieur ! mon pauvre Clarke ! ” she sobbed forth, in a rich full voice ; “ il meurt, cet homme respectable ; mon mari, oui, vraiment, mon epoux ! mais — mais — expliquez pour moi, bon Turnere ! ”

“ Oui, Madam Clarke ; ” and my man, having recently seen the sick soldier, explained that some forms were still wanting, to secure the wife’s claim on his prize money, and that I could be of service in completing these, if I would attend to them at once, as the poor man was not likely to see another sunrise. I promised the business my instant care, cheered the lovely mourner by kind words and a glass or two of good wine, led her back to the invalid, and

settled every thing to their satisfaction, just in time; for he did indeed die next day.

The widow herself came to announce this event.

“Oui, ma'amsellé,” she wept; “il est mort, il a quitté pour toujours son Adèle! que le bon Dieu lui pardonne! for noting — ma foi, but dat he vas hertique — excusez moi! he had no oder fault — il m'a sauvé, moi et ma sœur, in Bruxelles, après Vaterloo — Oh! il a sauvé plus que ma vie! Dans un an j'ai perdu mon père, marchand de dentelle, je vous assure, mon petit enfant, et son papa cheri! Ah! pauvre Adèle! c'en est fait de moi!”

Here even Turner broke in, with “Ne cryee voo, Madam, voter mari is up with the Bong-jew, and so's the jolly infant.”

She was grateful, to a disproportionate pitch of enthusiasm, for our little civilities.

The sergcent's obsequies received the customary military honours. The burial-ground, appropriated to the soldiery, was situated at a considerable distance from the military hospital, in which Clarke breathed his last. The melancholy procession had therefore to pass through the principal streets of the town, and, from the circumstance of the funeral taking place on a Sunday, vast numbers of people followed the

body. The deceased having been a non-commissioned officer of the Horse-Artillery, a led charger, in sable trappings, formed part of the cavalcade.

The attention, usually bestowed on the four-footed mourner was, however, in the present case, trivial, compared with the interest expressed for the lovely widow; whose tottering steps I endeavoured to support, during our slow march. So violent was her grief, that I feared she would not retain strength enough to fulfil her sad duty.

A delay of some half hour, at the entrance of the burying-ground, was an additional trial of her spirits and my patience; at length the clergyman, who had been detained by other duties, arrived. The service was performed with due solemnity, and the corse of the gallant sergeant lowered into the earth; it had scarcely reached its final resting-place, when the beauteous Adèle, springing from my arms, threw herself into the grave, on the coffin, with piercing cries.

The excellent Mr. Maule, the officiating clergyman, and myself, extricated her from her position. Violent hysterics had succeeded the calm which she had endeavoured to preserve during the service; and, consigning her to the care of some benevolent females who resided near the cemetery, I marched my party back to the barracks.

When I reported this scene, my sister felt sure

that the bereaved one would not long survive. I sent Turner to inquire for the poor soul, desiring him to bring her to us, but she had started for London, to spend some time with her husband's brother, who was in business there.

In less than a fortnight Adèle returned to Dover, and again paid her devoirs in the fort. I had now time to observe that the coarse material of her weeds was set off by French taste, and had a most fashionable air. We congratulated her on looking better.

“Monsieur est très honnête!” she answered, curtsying with April smiles; “de mourning, hélas! me convient assez joliment, on me dit. Ma’amselle, I make him myself, troo all my tears. Oh mon pauvre Clarke! mon Dieu! de bombazin est mosh more sheep’en France—mais, toute desolée que j’étois, I vould do respec to my good osban. Son frère he vish me to stay for always vid him. Oh, mes dignes amis, entre nous, c’étoit impossible; dans quel sael quartier de Londres he live! un si triste séjour!

“Juste as I require some changement to divert me, toujours prie a Dieu! toujours a l’église! nevare to de spectacle. Si j’avais tort en epousant my Clarke, j’en suis assez punie. I shall cross overe, and stay vid ma sœur, dere I ave un ami, qui, loin de rejoice dat my pauvre bien-aimé

is dead, vill sympatise vid h̃s Adèle, car il a aussi un cœur sensible."

All our fears that this "widowed heart would break" thus vanished, and, had I been living *en garçon*, I should certainly have endeavoured to convince Adèle that I, like my friend at Mons, had "*beaucoup de sentiment*." But now, as I saw her depart, I could not forbear humming a verse of that "pious Chanson" well known in the army —

" In came Madam Clarke,
And she fell a crying;
Jump about, says I,
Never think of dying!"

Some grave astrologer took the little theatre, thereat to display his Eidorapion, or transparent Orrery; and pleasantly edifying it was for young folks, sitting together, in the dark, to see how the world wagged, and have all the circulations of Venus set to music before their eyes, by the Celestina, a very dreamy sphere-like contrivance.

The lecturer showed us a twelve foot high miniature of the Moon, calling the inequalities on its surface seas and mountains; but, though a disciple of one Walker, he knew nothing of his Lexicographic namesake, for thus did he continue —

" Having proved that this beautiful planet has water, what becomes of the hypothesis that she

has no hair? water comes through hair. There could be no Jews without hair; if some of these dark spots are forests, she must have hair; hair is necessary for all fruits, and vegetation is necessary for the hair. Because, then, we cannot see it, nor has certain the quality of her atmosphere, dare we conclude that, while we are plentifully blest with hair, she has been deprived of it?

“ If she be occupied by feeling beings, she surely has hair; for how could they subsist, if that chief blessing of life had been cut off, or torne from them? there can be no animals with no hair; no birds without hair to float in; we know that many insects and reptiles live upon nothing but hair, nay, even the fishy tribe must have hair.

“ Hergo, if the useful, the universally admired object in question has but one mount, one sea, one forest, 'tis hard but she should be allowed one inhabitant; and, as he could only breathe through hair, 'tis evident that hair she must decidedly have, as abundantly as ourselves !”

• A day or two after this we were to pass the evening with some of our Western heights' friends. Anxious not to be late, I interrupted my sister in a small job of needlework which she was doing for me, and up the shaft we hurried.

Not long had our cronies' hospitable quarters received us, when I fancied the whole party had gone Orrery mad.

"Have you seen the Comet?" asked Mrs. Taylor. "No? then come hither! and I'll lead you to a spot whence it is just now visible, with a *tail*."

Then followed such whisperings, pointings, and titterings, that I was curious to ascertain their cause.

"Pray show *me* this comet of your's, ladies!" I cried.

"Eh, man," said Mrs. Montgomery, "ye're just the last person here likely to see it, tho' ye may feel its influence." "

"Do describe it to me, then!"

"Well, first it HAS a *tail*; then a luminous appearance, like a pin's head, stuck in a white circle; to and fro, eccentrically, it moves over the blue serene, with a pendulous motion, sometimes crossing the Moon's disk."

What there was to laugh at, in all this nonsense, I could not guess; but the more I went from one to the other, bowing and entreating explanations, the more the gypsies simpered. At last Mrs. Taylor, opining that, "if the luminous body entered the disk, I *might* feel its influence painfully," rendered the Comet "objective" to my vision.

The fact was, my sister had sewn one end of a roll of tape to the back of my waistcoat. I had broken in on her, ere she could cut it off to the right length, and donned my vest with this appendage dangling between the flaps of my jacket.

“Trifles light as air” suffice to raise a laugh, among friends met to be merry. Both the ladies to whom I have alluded were young, handsome, and clever; so was their constant companion, Mrs. Simcox; but Mrs. Montgomery, the fair Scot, had a spirit which, from her very girlhood, had turned even serious annoyances into themes for jest. She was the only — the motherless daughter of the stern General Campbell, who early installed her in the duties of housekeeper, and expected this giddy puss to give in her accounts with the precision of a Mrs. Decorum; but it sometimes happened that, in setting down the articles purchased, and their prices, she “put the cart before the horse;” her gruff papa never lectured her verbally, but wrote his remarks on the margin of the paper, and returned it for correction.

One such instance was as follows:—“General Campbell thinks five-and-sixpence exceedingly dear for Parsley.” Henrietta instantly saw her mistake; but, instead of formally rectifying it, wrote against the next item — “Miss Campbell

thinks *twopence-halfpenny* excessively cheap for fowls ;” and sent it back to her father.

At about sixteen she freed herself from these restraints, by eloping with a handsome ensign, and though poor, burdened with brats, unforgiven by her father, she retained not only her love for “ dear Hugh,” but her courageous cheerfulness and national humour.

Dining with Mr. Fector, I heard from him the outlines of a story, which I afterwards endeavoured to improve, by giving it “ a local habitation and a name ;” and which I here take the liberty to introduce episodically.

Late one evening, a packet of letters, just arrived by the English mail, was handed to Mynheer von Kapell, a merchant of Hamburgh. His head clerk awaited, as usual, for any orders which might arise from their contents ; and was not a little surprised to observe the brow of his wealthy employer suddenly clouded ; again and again he perused the letter he held, at last audibly giving vent to his feelings—

“ Donder and blitzen !” he burst forth ; “ but this is a shock—who would have thought it ? The house of Bennett and Ford to be shaken thus ! What is to be done ?”

“ Bennett and Ford failed ?” cried the astonished clerk.

“Failed! ten thousand devils! not so bad as that; but they are in deep distress, and have suffered a heavy loss; read, good Vansen, and let me have your advice.”

The clerk read as follows:

“London, August 21.

“Most respected friend,

“Your’s of the 5th instant came safe to hand, and will meet prompt attention. We have to inform you, with deep regret, that the son of the trustworthy cashier of this long established house has absconded, taking with him bills, accepted by our firm, to a large amount, as per margin; and a considerable sum in cash. We have been able to trace the misguided young man to a ship bound for Holland, and we think it probable he may visit Hamburg (where our name is so well known, and, we trust, so highly respected) for the purpose of converting these bills into cash. He is a tall, handsome youth, about five feet eleven inches, with dark hair and eyes; speaks French and German well, and was dressed in deep mourning, in consequence of the recent death of his mother. If you should be able to find him, we have to request you will use your utmost endeavours to regain possession of the bills named in the margin; but, as we have a

high respect for the father of the unfortunate young man, we will further thank you to procure for him a passage on board the first vessel sailing for Batavia, paying the expence of his voyage, and giving him the sum of two 'hundred louis d'or, (which you will place to our account current,) on condition that he does not attempt to revisit England till he receives permission so to do.

“ We are, most respected friend,

“ Your obedient servants,

“ BENNETT, FORD, and Co.”

“ Mynheer von Kapell.”

“ My life on't,” said Yansen, “ 'tis the very lad I saw this day, walking up and down in front of the Exchange, who appeared half out of his wits, looking anxiously for some particular object, yet shunning general observation: his person answers the description.”

“ That's fortunate,” said the merchant; “ you must devote the morrow to searching for him; bring him to me, if possible, and I'll do my utmost to serve my excellent friends, Bennett and Ford of London.”

Early next morning, Yansen went to the Exchange, and kept an anxious watch, for many hours, in vain; he was returning, hopeless, when

he saw the identical youth coming out of the door of a Jew money-changer; he brushed hastily past the clerk, exclaiming, "The unconscionable scoundrel! seventy per cent for bills on the best house in England!"

Yansen approached him. "Young gentleman," said he, in a very mild tone, "you appear to have met with some disappointment from that griping wretch, Levi. If you have any business to transact, my house is close by; I shall be happy to treat with you."

"Willingly," replied the youth; "the sooner the better. I must leave Hamburgh at day-break."

The clerk led him to the house of the merchant, and entered it by a small side-door, desiring the young man to be seated, whilst he gave some directions. In a few minutes he re-appeared, bringing Von Kapell with him. The worthy Hamburgher having no talent for a roundabout way of doing business, said bluntly—

"So, Mynheer! we are well met; it will be useless to attempt disguise with me; look at this!" and he put into his hand the letter he had the night before received.

Overwhelmed with consternation, the young man fell at his feet.

"Oh! Heaven!" he cried, "I am lost for

ever—my father, my indulgent, my honourable father, is heart-broken and disgraced by my villany. My mother !”—here he became nearly inaudible, and hid his face in his hands—“ you,” he continued, “are spared all participation in the agony your wretched son is suffering.”

“ Boy, boy !” said the merchant, raising him, and quite melted at this show of penitence, “ listen to me ! are the bills safe ? If so, you may still hope.”

“ They are,” eagerly exclaimed the youth ; “ how fortunate that I did not listen to the offers of that rapacious Jew. Here, sir, take them, I implore you,” pulling from his breast a large pocket-book ; “ they are untouched. Spare but my life, and I will yet atone. Oh, spare me from a shameful death !”

There was a pause, broken at last by Yansen’s saying significantly to his employer, “ As per margin.”

The merchant turned to the unhappy young man. “ Take heart,” said he. “ ‘ Wenn die Noth ist am ’größten die Hülfe ist am nächsten’*—there’s an old German proverb for you. Sit down, and hear what I have to say. I think myself not a little fortunate in so soon being able to fulfil the wishes of my English correspondents ;

* When things are at the worst they must mend.

your natural alarm! did not suffer you to finish their letter ; you will perceive how generously they mean to act ; their house's credit saved, they intend not to punish you. Read, read ; and, Yansen, order some catables, and a bottle or two of my old Heidelberg hock ; trouble always makes me thirsty — three glasses, my good Yansen."

Again the young Englishman hid his face, and sighed convulsively, " I do not deserve this lenity. My excellent father ! this is a 'tribute to your virtue."

Von Kapell left his guests' reflections undisturbed, till a servant entered, who placed refreshments on a well-polished oak table ; when she retired, he resumed —

" And now, what devil tempted you to play the — runaway ?" swallowing the term he intended to use. " Was it for the wenches, or the dicing-table ?"

" Spare me, most kind and worthy sir, I intreat you ! To my father I will make full confession of all my faults ; but he must be the first to know the origin of my crimes."

" Well, well, take another glass of wine ; you shall stay in my house till we can find a passage for you. It was but last night my good ship the Christine sailed for Batavia, and——"

"Under favour," interrupted Yansen, "she has not yet left the harbour; the wind blew too fresh for her to venture on crossing the sand-banks at night, and it is now only shifting round a point or two."

"You are lucky, youngster," quickly added the merchant; "the Christine has noble accommodations; you shall aboard this evening. Put these in the chest, good Yansen," handing him the bills, "and count me out the two hundred louis d'or the boy is to have. Come, man! finish your meal, for I see," said he, regarding a vane on the gable of an opposite house, "you have no time to lose."

The meal was finished—the money given—the worthy merchant added as much good advice as the brief space would permit. The Briton was profuse in his expressions of gratitude, promised amendment, and returned the warm grasp of Von Kapell, unable to speak for his tears. Yansen accompanied him on board, gave the owner's most particular charge to the skipper to pay his passenger every attention on the voyage. The vessel cleared the harbour — was in a few hours out of sight — and, the next morning, Mynheer von Kapell wrote to London a full account of the transaction, returning the bills so fortunately recovered.

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In less than a fortnight the following letter reached the good old German :—

“ Sir,

“ We have to inform you, that we never lost the bills sent in your last favour, every one of which is fabricated, and our acceptance forged. Our cashier has no son, nor has he lost a wife. We are sincerely grieved that your friendly feeling towards our house should have led you to listen to so palpable a cheat. •

“ We remain, with great respect,

“ Your’s,

“ BENNETT, FORD, and Cp.

“ P.S. If you should ever hear again of the person you have, at your own expense, sent to Batavia, we shall be glad to know.”

What can be said of the good Von Kapell’s feelings, but that they may “ be more easily conceived than described !” *

‘The day after I heard the Banker’s story, it was my fate to listen to one almost as ingenious, and equally villanous. Mr. Rundall, of the well-

* This “ Incident in the Life of a Rascal” first appeared in the Monthly Magazine, for July, 1832 ; and, although I had placed my scene in the Pays Bas, I was grievously disappointed of my remittances from *Holland*.

known firm of Goldsmiths and Jewellers, came post-haste to Dover, in the hope that, aided by his friend, Colonel Ford, he might recover a quantity of valuable diamonds, which had been stolen from his house. My readers will doubtless recollect the facts of the case. I shall not, therefore, trespass their repetition here. By the advice of the Colonel, Mr. Rundall set off, on his route to St. Petersburg, a market more likely to be available to the thieves than Paris, and, by great good fortune, found one of the robbers at Aix la Chapelle, from whom he recovered half the stolen jewels.

CHAPTER VII.

VENICE—THE RIALTO—CANALS OF REAL WATER—WHOSE BELVIDERA?—A ROYAL DEATH—ONE MAN IN HIS TIME PLAYS MANY PARTS—THE TAMED FORESTER—NATURE WILL BE NATURE—PORTSMOUTH—A WAGER—BROGUE AND BLARNEY—THE BET DECIDED—HOUSE BREAKING—BED MAKING—A MARKED MAN—THE LION'S HEAD—A SWALLOW.

TOWARDS the end of September my sister left me for the West. I was, therefore, doubly glad to hear that Mr. and Mrs. Foote had returned from a continental trip, and intended to resume their theatrical amusements.

I was invited to attend a Thespian council, at Charlton Place, where, after due deliberation, it was agreed that, however commodious the drawing-room had proved for the purpose, there was nothing like a theatre, after all. Negotiations with Cope-land were immediately set on foot, for the use of the Dover play-house.

“ Venice Preserved ” was fixed on for the tragedy, and “ Raising the Wind ” for the farce. Invita-

tions to all the neighbouring gentry were issued, and these were not all the busy notes of preparation. After a diligent search amongst the stock scenery, nothing like a view of the Rialto was to be found, not even a foreign street that might do for the nonce; the one row of houses, which served either for Verona or Rome, London or Athens, were decorated with brass plates, bronze knockers to their doors, and iron railings, interspersed with lamp-posts. To play Venice Preserved without a Rialto was impossible; my success in depicting Aranza's cottage was brought in judgment against me, and I was implored to set to work on the Venetian bridge. Two days were completely devoted to my new occupation, which proved tiresome enough, from the fact of the canvass being laid flat upon the stage, and I very readily accepted an offer of assistance, made me by an officer named Condry. I had taken vast pains with the buildings on the opposite side of the canal, had arranged a tolerably successful fore-shortening of the bridge, on the left of my picture, and requested my new auxiliary to throw in the reflections of the houses, whilst I went home to dinner. Certainly no professed artists work harder in their crafts than amateurs, who are stage-struck. I swallowed my repast, hastened back, and found that Condry had employed so much nicety of touch for the reflec-

tion, as to make the actual objects appear secondary considerations. To obviate this defect, I had recourse to the following expedient, which I executed whilst my friend stood by, horrified at the treatment his portion of the painting received. I sent for divers filled buckets, and a couple of new mops ; one of these, well-saturated, I drew along the waters of the canal, as long as moisture remained in this huge painting-brush ; then, taking the other into use, Condry was directed to wash off the colour he had so laboriously laid on, and have the instrument sufficiently cleaned for what he thought my work of destruction. When, however, the canvass thus treated was perfectly dry, he confessed to me that my experiment had succeeded marvellously ; a transparency and *liquid* effect had been produced, that was perfectly extraordinary, considering the strangeness of the tools I had used.

Our various preparations being completed, adhering to the Charlton Place system, we gave a dressed rehearsal to the tradesmen, &c. of Dover. Our amateur force did not muster strongly, but the gaps were easily filled by the members of Cope-land's company. Fanny, his youngest daughter, enacted the gentle Belvidera, and even those who know the laughter-inspiring Mrs. Fitzwilliam of to-day would have then declared tragedy was her forte. The love of dramatic display had

spread its influence even to the servants of Mr. Foote. John and Thomas, the two footmen, entreated permission to tread the boards, and the subordinate parts of Spinoso and Theodore were entrusted to them. Never were men more gratified than they, when the costume they were to assume was shown them; their remarks on trunks, doublets, ruffs, and russet boots, were edifying in the extreme.

Our grand night was fully attended. Box, pit, and gallery, crowded with *gens comme il faut*, who really appeared to have come on purpose to realize the motto over the procenium—"Omnes Gentes Plaudite;" and, as many of them read it, "every gentleman is expected to applaud," those present did not wish their gentility to be questioned, if so slight an exertion as smacking* their kid gloves together, with continuous rapidity, was the test.

The intention of our master of the revels to give another performance, in the course of a fortnight, was frustrated by the untimely death of the Princess Charlotte. This event spread universal gloom, and created the most anxious apprehensions in the bosoms of mothers, husbands, and near relatives, for all the ladies, of their family and acquaintance, who were expecting their first confinements. Every demonstration of regret was shown by the garrison and town, flags half-masted, muffled bells, and

general mourning. All social parties were suspended, and dulness reigned despotically.

Nearly connected, as I have already observed, the Footes were with the Royal Family, still the ruling passion gained the mastery; and, as soon after the funeral as decency would permit, we renewed our dramatic amusements—the cousin of England enacting our cousin of Denmark, the princely Hamlet.

I remember being much amused at seeing old Copeland, who had played Polonius, assist in digging his daughter's grave; and, when sent off by his companion of the spade and mattock, to fetch a stoup of liquor from Youghan, throwing a black gown over his working dress, and advancing as a priest at the head of the funeral procession.

Captain Thomson, who personated the Ghost, was a precise elocutionist, and pronounced “Adieu, Adieu, Adieu!” with so Gallic an accent, that a wag shouted—“I say, you are taking French leave of us!”

The family of the “top lawyer of the place” frequently attended our balls. On the brothers arriving once, without any of their sisters, their remarkable name gave somebody an opportunity for complaining that there were “so many Knockers, and not one belle.”

These young folks had, one day, met in Wal-

dershare Park, (their father being, I ought to add, land-steward and agent to Lord Guildford) a keeper, bearing a poor fawn, who must have been wounded by mischance, being too young for the table; the man thought, however, it would be charity to put it out of its pain; but one of the ladies was so sure she could revive it, that the noble owner gave it to her care, and it became domesticated at the country establishment of the Knockers, rejoicing in the peculiar name of Bushy Rough. The fawn took a particular fancy to the old butler; it would trot after him, as he waited at the table, and pop its innocent nose between the shoulders of the guests, eating bread or fruit out of their hands. Thus this most picturesque favourite throve, till almost too big for a pet of the house; his antlers sprouted formidably, and when the season returned at which Diana gives over her foresters to Cupid, the dark-eyed darling turned restless, shunned his human friends, pinned, neglecting his food.

It was thought, by the inexperienced, that, if he were turned out among the herd, he would yet do well; or even, all the Knockers hoped, that, if sent to the farm of their friends the Rutters, he might find relief; pain as it would be to part with him—to think that his haunch' might one day smoke on the table against which it had so long and so often

rubbed in safety, yet the creature must have its liberty; but he had grown up to stag's estate; unused to lodge and board like a wild deer, unknown to his kind, he seemed to dread the sight of them, as if instinct told him that they would give no peaceful welcome to one sophisticated; and yet some other instinct said such should have been his companions, his loves. Without ever growing vicious, he languished to a mere skeleton, dying at last, a victim to mistaken kindness, and an unsuitable education.

A Jacques might have "moralized this spectacle into a thousand similes;" but I give facts, without comments.

The 14th Regiment being hourly expected to arrive at Portsmouth from Malta, I was most earnestly entreated, by the ruling powers at home, to hasten thither, and give meeting to a brother of mine, who had been some years absent; and, although this request was any thing but opportune, I could not refuse it.

Taking London in my way, I soon reached my destination. How changed since last I had visited this splendid sea-port did it appear! Really, and not figuratively, grass was growing in its streets. Instead of the constant throng of blue and red jackets, that I had been used to look on—a solitary sailor, steering his undisturbed course, was a

sight to see. The wind being unfavourable for the arrival of vessels from the Mediterranean, I feared that I should be condemned to remain some days in this place, so shorn of its former glories ; it was therefore with considerable pleasure I encountered a warm-hearted friend of former years, Colonel Thwaites of the 51st.

It was late in the afternoon when we met ; with the characteristic hospitality of his country, he insisted on my accompanying him to the barracks, and dining with him at the mess. So cordial an invitation I could not refuse.

It is customary, at military tables, if you have a visiter upon a day not appropriated for the reception of strangers, to secure a seat near the president, by turning down two plates, one for the invited, the other for the inviter. The kind Colonel, on reaching the mess-room, proceeded to perform this ceremony, whilst I awaited him at the door, to be shown to his room, till the drums beat the "roast-beef." I heard a voice exclaim, "Hollo, Colonel ! a visiter, and not upon a guest-day ? I thought you were averse to such arrangements." "Only," replied the Colonel, "that I may not induce the youngsters to drink wine oftener than they can afford ; but this is a particular case, a friend passing through ; some of ye know him, Hill of the Artillery, an old Hythe crony, and, more by token, a countryman of mine."

“ Hill ’s not an Irishman,” replied the unseen.

“ The devil he’s not? May be you’ll say that I’m not, by and bye.”

“ Come, Colonel, I’ll bet you a dozen of claret that he’s not.”

“ I wouldn’t rob you, my lad ; sure I ought to know.”

“ Rob me? you’re afraid to bet, Colonel ! but I’m not. I’ll lay you two dozen to one.”

“ I’ll not take odds, at all, upon it ; but you are so mighty fond of wagging, I’ll back my opinion—my certain knowledge—by a couple of dozen, to be drank at mess this day.”

“ Done !”

I could not help hearing this, and was pondering on what course to take, when my young friend Johnstone came hastily to me, saying—

“ How are you, my dear fellow? delighted to see you ! have but a moment to put you on your guard ; have you heard? well, keep up the joke, and we’ll have some fun with the dear old Colonel.”

My host now appeared, and led me to his quarters ; to the various observations he made, I replied in a mighty quiet brogue, to begin with, thinking that, if I changed my note too suddenly, he would have suspected some mischief. The clock struck, and we descended. I found some three or four men whom I had met on service, and was intro-

duced to several new acquaintance. Every glass of wine I swallowed gave me confidence for carrying on the plot, and my conversation with the Colonel had the effect of rendering my Irish intonation more correct, as I caught the sounds he uttered, and replied to him in tones as like his own as I could. I mustered every scrap of pure Irish that I possessed, and interlarded my discourse with these precious morceaux, convincing my too credulous friend that he was sitting on velvet; he could not suppose that these emerald gems of the western world came out of the mouth of a stranger. Dinner past. The king's health and one or two toasts deemed indispensable were drunk, when Colonel Thwaites, rising, said—

“ Mr. President. I beg leave to inform you that I have been under the necessity of doing a thing for which I have a mighty strong aversion; but I trust when I tell you that it secures to the present company a couple dozen of claret, I may be forgiven.”

“ Hear! Hear!” from the subalterns.

“ Mr. President! I have accepted a wager with my friend Captain Brown, merely to cure him of the trick he has of knowing better than any body else; and I have the satisfaction of informing you, that the wager can be decided by the very person about whom it is made; my friend and guest on

my right hand. Sir, with your permission, I will state to that gentleman what the bet is about, and receive his answer, which will settle the matter at once. Captain Brown bets me that Hill of the Artillery is not an Irishman ; now, my lad !” (slapping me good-humouredly on the shoulder) “spake out, for the honour of your country !”

I rose, made my obeisance to the chair, and replied, in my usual manner, “ Captain Brown is perfectly right. I am an Englishman.”

“ Och, get out of that !” cried the Colonel : “ d’ye hear how finely he mimicks your English gab ? How the devil did you pick up their lingo ? You’d better not play off any of your London airs, when you go home, I warn ye ; come now, no more funning ! by the virtue of your oath—are you not, heart and soul, Irish ?”

“ No, bless’ee, I be Glo’stershire.”

Roars followed this *dialectic* reply. Every body laughed but the Colonel ; he stormed, raved, called me “ renegade, false-hearted denier of my native land !” and appeared to be mortified at the turn affairs had taken. The winning Captain left his seat to shake me warmly by the hand ; and Thwaites, determined to show that the loss did not affect him, soon joined the rest in the laugh, which certainly was at his expence.

A very wet afternoon this turned out ; for, no

sooner was the claret drank, than a party followed the Colonel to his room, where brandy and water, cigars and broiled bones, kept us together till an early hour in the morning. It was not, therefore, a matter of surprise to me that the door of the George was closed, and that all my pullings at the bell were unavailing. Recollecting young Dorn-ton's persuasive reasons to his father, when he was locked out, I determined to avoid the evils therein named, and "take mine ease at my inn," if it were possible. The house of the Port Admiral (I forget if the venerable Sir Richard Bickerton then tenanted it) was under repair; borrowing a ladder from the scaffolding, I mounted to one of the drawing-room windows of the hotel, and, to my extreme satisfaction, found it unfastened.

Effecting my entrance so easily, the next thing was to get rid of the means I had employed, by pushing away the ladder, in such a manner as to fall on the opposite side of the street; this done, I made my way to the door of the room I had just entered, and, cruel fate! found it locked, the key on the outside. This was provoking; but ingenuity provided for my comforts, by the application of many things to uses for which they had not been originally destined, and, as Dr. Watts says, "all my wants were well supplied;" a sofa, and as many table covers as I could muster, with the hearth rug

over my feet, stood instead of the anticipated bed and bedding. Thus I was enabled to snooze cosily enough till a scream from the housemaid awoke me. She was not prepared to find a sleeping beauty in the drawing-room, and rushed down stairs to alarm Boots and the coach porter, the only persons yet up, with the intelligence that she had found a thief on the first floor ; the men hastened to make him captive, and were somewhat surprized, on reaching the room, to find it unoccupied, as I had taken the earliest opportunity of making my way to my bed-chamber, leaving the militia of the inn to hunt for the intruder.

It was not till I descended to breakfast, and confessed my night's adventure to the waiter, that the mysterious and sudden disappearance of the robber was explained to the much agitated Betty House.

The officers of my own corps, quartered here, were strangers to me, a circumstance easily understood, when the great number which constitutes our regiment is taken into consideration ; but the return from leave of absence of one I knew soon served to make me known to the others. My friend M——, who was a fine fellow, and had seen most of the Peninsular campaign, kindly invited me to the mess. Washing my hands in his room before dinner, I observed an unusual collection of letters embroidered at one end of the towel he handed

me—on making out the characters, I found, instead of his name at full length, which I at first supposed it was, that the inscription ran thus —“ We the Artillery of the First Division.” I requested an explanation, and learnt that his family had been much amused, whilst perusing the letters he wrote from the seat of war, by his frequent phrase—“ We the artillery,” &c.; and that he having hinted how acceptable a new set of shirts, table cloths, towels, &c., would be, they had forwarded to him the desired linen, every bit of which the fair hands of his female relatives had marked in the same whimsical manner which I found upon the towel. The following day I received a note from Colonel Thwaites, which ran thus—

“ My dear boy !

“ Though I ought not to call you so, for the cruel trick which you served me the other day, in disowning the Green Isle, after your brogue had fully persuaded me that you were what, at any rate, you deserve to be—an Irishman ; but as you then were good enough to take us in the rough, come, dine with me to-day, and you shall fare better, *caid mille failtah !* as our countrymen say ? Well, the bet’s decided, and the claret drank. I don’t mean seriously to doubt your word ; but I would be overpaid for the start you took out of

me, if you would own to-day that you are a born Hibernian after all.

“Your’s, ever, my dear fellow.”

In *coorse*, as the Colonel would have said, I went; and although no more bets were offered about me, I had the good fortune to elicit some mirth, from the following circumstance. When the cloth was withdrawn, a very massive silver snuff-box was placed upon table, which was only paraded on gala days; this tabatière was a tontine; the names of the original subscribers duly engraven inside the lid; many of whom had long deposited their dust in boxes of larger dimension. It was ornamented by a row of lions’ heads; and it so happened, that their number exactly corresponded with the list of names. A gentleman who sat on my left, and who had, during dinner, made a vast number of observations, tending to prove that he was not over-blessed with common sense, but a capital subject for a trot, occupied himself in reading these names over once or twice, and regarding the box in every variety of position. I was tempted to risk a remark to him, which was not intended to reach other ears.

“Yes, sir,” I said, “the box is indeed valuable; you are aware, I presume, that the portraits are allowed to be faithful.”

“ Portraits, sir ! where ? ”

“ These, sir ; ” and I pointed to the semi-human visages of the lions ; their faces had received different expressions from various accidents, constant cleaning, and other causes. I selected one of the number, begged my gull to say if he did not perceive the likeness to Colonel Thwaites, allowing for the change of head-gear, gentlemen wearing full-bottomed wigs at the time the box was made. The gudgeon swallowed my bait. I then called his attention to two or three other heads, giving them names from the cover at random. He was delighted at the discovery, and took the earliest opportunity of felicitating the officers on the possession of such a treasure ; to their evident wonder, expatiated on its valuable collection of portraits, and asked, with the greatest gravity —

“ Pray, Colonel, how many years ago is it since you wore a full-bottomed wig, like the one represented here ? ”

“ Oh,” laughed the Colonel, who, having slyly listened to my flam, instantly detected the state of the case ; “ Hill there made my first and last. Young as he appears, he is the artist of all those likenesses too.”

These broad hints, far from undeceiving the matter-of-fact, only deepened a perplexity which

he strove to conceal. With a grave yet simple air,
you may make some men swallow any thing —
nought is impossible to their literalities.

They only muse, looking, as, who should say,
“ Strange People ! God is great ! ”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SOUTH-SEA COMPANY—MASCULINE NEEDLE-WORK—"ONE WHO HAS HAD HIS LOSSES"—THE INVINCIBLES—THE SEWERS SEWED—FIXTURES—AS GUDE SYNE, AS SUNE—THE LAST STITCH—ORIENTAL RESEARCHES—FOOD FOR THE MIND—SUSANNAH AND MY ELDER—FLIGHT NO DISGRACE—FIRE QUENCHED SWIFTLY.

To get rid of the effect of my last night's late sitting, I borrowed a horse from one of my own corps, and accompanied Colonel Thwaites in a ride over South-Sea Common and its neighbourhood. The sight of these well-known scenes brought back to my remembrance an evening I had passed within the walls of a neighbouring fort, and which escaped me in my first Recollections.

It was in the year 1814, and during the time that I was garrisoned in Portsmouth, that I received a note from Sir John Trevelyan, which ran as follows —

" Fort Cumberland.

" Dear Hill,

" Will you do me the favour to come out here to dinner to-day? If possible, prevail on

Doyle to accompany you. I want the aid of both to sew up the Fogeys.

“ Your’s, very truly,

“ JOHN TREVELYAN.”

I protest that I knew not what assistance the Colonel required at my hands, or the exact meaning of the strange phrase with which he terminated his brief note ; and I think it most probable that my reader is in a similar state of ignorance ; but I will do my utmost to explain these mysterious words.

Sir John Trevelyan commanded a regiment of Militia called the Cornish Miners ; finer fellows never wielded pickaxe or musket ; a more jovial set than the officers never sat at board. The Allied Sovereigns were daily expected to visit Portsmouth ; and to make room for a regiment, which had returned from service, the Miners were marched off to Fort Cumberland, on the verge of South-Sea Common, already occupied by a veteran battalion.

These old soldiers had received the new comers with great cordiality, and it was determined to take the earliest opportunity of returning their hospitality, by inviting them to the mess of the Miners. It was to this dinner that my friend Doyle and myself were asked ; and, as we were intimate not only with the Colonel, but most of the pleasant men of his regiment, we readily complied with his wish.

In our very best embroidered jackets, and severely got up for the day, we reached Fort Cumberland; were kindly welcomed by our friends, who, however, did not carry their affection so far as to favour us with the hug for which their county is celebrated.

The mess-room, like every other apartment in the fort, was a low casemated chamber, receiving light from the narrow windows which flanked the only door it possessed; but, from the thickness of the masonry, and the quantity of earth it supported, (which formed the parapet of the fort,) was extremely cool, and appeared admirably adapted for a summer refectory.

The dinner drum beat, and the Veterans began to assemble; the first trio who arrived had four arms and five legs to their share; then came two more, each minus a fin, but sporting capital lower limbs. The Major, who was next announced, had been severely wounded, though the shots, which had left such evident marks of a ruined constitution, had spared his precious limbs. Several others, all more or less maimed, came dropping in. Doyle and myself were made known to these gallant old chaps as they appeared.

The dinner was served, the Colonel was about to take his seat, when looking round, he said —

“ I do not perceive Captain Camplin, I hope

nothing prevents our having the pleasure of his company?"

"Here I am, Colonel," shouted a stentorian voice from the bottom of the room, and, with a rapid pace, the speaker advanced: He, poor soul, had lost leg, arm, and eye; but the brilliancy of the orb that was left was extraordinary; and the activity with which he stumped along almost tempted you to believe that he had been born with a wooden leg. . . .

"Here I am, my dear Colonel; beg pardon for being last, but I had to attend some female friends, who came to see our fort here, and I have been promenading with them on the common."

Placing the Major on his right, and the senior Captain, a fine-looking old man, with silver hair, named Micklejohn, on his left, the Colonel took his seat. I had been requested to sit next to the Major, and Doyle to take another of the visitors under his especial care. Opposite to me sat the last comer, and, on my dexter side, a sturdy old cock who was blest with his proper quantity of digits. Soup being a one-handed invention was no criterion, but, when the fish was served, I was surprised to see that my opposite acquaintance managed to eat with as much ease as his more gifted neighbours, nor was his drinking less expert; he was challenged by most of his Cornish friends, by several of his

own corps, and, of course, by Doyle and myself, or we were not fulfilling the object of our visit.

It was impossible, during dinner, to enter into conversation, even with your nearest companion; the rattle of knives, forks, and plates, reverberated along the roof and sides of our dungeon-shaped chamber. When, however, the cloth was drawn, and the wine made its circuit, a stillness, by comparison, reigned.

Various toasts were drank, and many speeches made; excepting in the glass of the Major not a single heel-tap had been detected. Presently the old boys, warmed with the generous grape, began to relate to their militia friends the battles they had seen. Captain Camplin outshone them all; marvellous as many of his adventures were, it would have been cruel to doubt a single statement from so marked a man.

The Major related to Sir John, that when the battalion arrived at Waterford, some two years before, the people had stared at the mutilated figures that passed; but Camplin's company closing the line of march, and his triple suffering meeting their gaze, an impudent rascal pointed him out to his fellows, saying, "Now, by Jasus! the town's taken!"

"I remember," replied the hero on whom this remark had been made—"I remember our Wa-

terford quarters well ; I dined one day with a merchant there, and he, being anxious to give me a taste of some curious Claret of his own importing, was prevented by the fact of the corkscrew being absent without leave ; I won his heart, and those of all present, by producing one from my breeches' pocket, which I invariably carried, and, on the handle of which I had caused to be engraved ' The young man's best companion.' ”

“ A most profane appropriation of the name of an excellent buik, my good Camplin,” observed Captain Micklejohn ; “ but you were a'ways a ne'er do weel, or you might have had some of your blessed members spared ye, and your Lisbon campaign not attended wi' such melancholy circumstances.”

“ May I ask what happened there, sir ? ” said I to the white-haired warrior ; but, ere he could speak, the piercing glare of the one eye was full upon me, and the sufferer said quickly —

“ A trifle, sir, not worth relating ; known only to my friend Micklejohn and the surgeon, however ; we'll change the subject. Sir John, couldn't you prevail on one of your officers to favour us with a song ? ”

The requisition was obeyed, and the singer was entitled to the privilege of a call. The Major was asked to name those of his officers who were given

to the "concord of sweet sounds," and many voices quickly proclaimed Camplin their principal vocalist.

He wasted no time in useless ceremony, but loudly chanted forth the cheering appeal, said to be written by General Wolfe, of "Why, soldiers, why, should we be melancholy, whose duty 'tis to die?" with such a volume of voice as proved that his lungs were as "ilegant" as any in "Bally-racket."

The nine o'clock drums had beaten some time, but "Devil a man would stir from his can." About ten, the Major, pleading ill-health, made a stealthy exit, and I of course closed up to my host.

"Did you ever," said Sir John to me, *sotto voce*, "see such a set of fellows? why half my lads are tipsy at this moment, but not one of these venerable sponges seem to have sopped up a quarter of the wine they intend to carry. I see plainly I shall have a difficult task in sewing up the Fogeys; however, something must be done for the honour of Cornwall."

He whispered a mess-waiter, who left the room on the instant. Bumpers were proposed, in rapid succession — some to be drank with honours; and it was a sight to see how manfully the lame, halt, and blind stood up, whilst many of their Militia

friends were obliged to balance themselves by holding on to the edge of the table.

Suddenly the door flew open, and the band of the regiment entered the room, playing their county tune of "One and All!" and paraded several times round the assembled party. I could not but smile to see the black man, who played the cymbals, clash them together close to the ears of the visitors, as he passed, and the big drum soon followed the example of his sable countrymen. Such a din I never heard, and most heartily glad was I when the musicians were permitted to return to their beds, from which they had been so unexpectedly summoned.

Their visit had produced the desired effect; one by one the party lessened, inviters as well as guests; and, about eleven o'clock, none remained but Captain Camplin, Micklejohn, the President, Doyle, and myself; the former, in joyous accents, said—

"Ah, my dear Colonel, this is delightful, we can now enjoy an hour or two in rational conversation; the bandsmen are gone to their barracks, and my milksop brother officers have sneaked off to their rooms; I don't mean to follow them just yet, although I pride myself on being an early man."

"The devil you do?" ejaculated Sir John, in a low voice.

“ Yes, Colonel, there’s Andrew Micklejohn and myself, old companions and fellow-sufferers, we like to set a good example, and usually retire early.”

“ It would have been well for you if you had done so all your life, Camplin, but that infernal Senora or Donna at Lis——”

“ Well, well, don’t let’s talk of those matters now ; four or five more glasses of wine, and then we’ll wish the Colonel good-night.”

These four or five were speedily despatched, the worthy Scotchman had suddenly ceased to join in conversation, finding his articulation become every moment more indistinct, and rose to leave the room.

“ Don’t go, Andrew ; three or four more glasses and I’m with you, for you know, old Crowdey, I’m an early man.”

Doyle, under pretext of assisting the Caledonian, made his retreat ; but it would have puzzled a Solomon to say which of the two staggered most.

“ Well, Sir John, we’ve had a delightful day ; good dinner, excellent wine, and plenty of it. Capital Port your’s—not a head-ache in a bin-full ; if I wasn’t an early man I could take another bottle with pleasure ; but, as it is, three or four more glasses shall suffice, and then I’ll bid you good-afternoon——”

“Morning, you mean,” said the Colonel, beginning to evince some signs of weariness.

“Impossible, my dear sir ; I make it a rule to be in bed before midnight—have done so for years — am well known by all my friends as an early man.”

“Take another anchovy toast, my good sir,” said I, rather anxious to see the end of the carouse, which very little more wine must effect.

“Thank you, my dear fellow ; I honour you, and I honour your cloth ; you’ve gained immortal laurels this day, drinking your wine like a man, and keeping sober as a judge — as wise as a dove, and as innocent as a serpent. I’ll tell you what happened to an officer of your regiment in the year 1770, when I was a lieutenant — no, I wasn’t gazetted till 68—yes, I was—it was at the taking of one of the West-India Islands, or the Cape of Good Hope, or Flushing, I don’t remember where —just now — but, however, a glass of wine will refresh my memory — thank you, Sir John, I’ll drink your health in a bumper ; and then, if you will do me the honour to come over to my room, we’ll have some cold cigars — a little brandy — and some—beef and water — Artillery man, Sir John’s health, up standing, with three !”

The jolly old cock got upon his leg, the wine found its way down his throat, and his body to the

floor ; down he fell, flat and speechless. I hastened to assist him, but Sir John, catching my arm, said—

“ Join me, my dear boy, in a cheer ; we’ve won the day — ‘Hurrah ! we’ve sewn up the Fogeys !’ ”

A transport, having on board a portion of the 14th regiment, arrived the next day ; from one of the officers I learnt that my brother had been left at Malta with the last division, and was not likely to reach England for some time. On this intelligence I took leave of my Portsmouth friends, and hastened to Bristol.

Before I relate any adventure that befel me there, let me take the opportunity of correcting an error which I committed in my first series, regarding a display of gold coin in a jeweller’s window, including sovereigns, which were not current in 1814. My two visits to Portsmouth had become confused in my memory. It must have been at the period of which I am *now* treating, that what I attributed to an earlier date had fallen under my notice. This mistake of mine was first detected by no less a personage than John Gibson Lockhart, Esq. ; and I cannot help feeling proud that volumes so slight as mine should have been honoured by his perusal.

Whilst at home, I beguiled, as was my wont, the

evenings by reading to my family. Moore's Oriental Romance was then new ; writing down its title, I sent for it, to the Circulating Library at which I subscribed, by the very maid whose " carrots and geraniums" flourish in my first series. After a long absence she returned, saying—

" Pleaze, zur, Mrs. Routh wunt ha none till the next ship da come in ; and at Merryweather's, awver the Change, it be three shillings a pound."

" What d'ye mean, girl ? I sent you to Rees's !"

" Iss, zure, zur, and thur I went ; but a tould I that were my mistake, and zent I right."

" Why, surely, he couldn't understand——"

" Oh, a did though, well anough, zur, thof I'd a lost the peaper, I zed the neame playn out to'n."

" What name, child ?"

" Why, arrow-root, zur."

Fancy " Lalla Rookh" warm with sugar, to be taken at bed-time. After this blunder I thought fit to transact all such business in person, though my stupid messenger was soon dismissed, and a new parlour-maid coming in her place.

My leave was within a week of expiration. I thought of writing for a renewal ; 'twas a dull evening, I had several volumes to return, in order to procure fresh ones, and intended starting with them into the town, but was begged by my mo-

ther to wait till after tea, when the just arrived domestic should carry the books in a basket. I was pencilling down a list of others, when our "cooling beverage" was brought in, and I was disturbed by some awkward stumble on the part of this maid, which nearly upset the whole *equi-page*.

"Why, Susan!" said my mother.

I looked up. That I saw before me a very pretty plump blonde, still in her teens, was nothing—but I *had* seen her previously, and in circumstances which rendered it extremely awkward for me to encounter her as my mother's "maid;" which she certainly was not likely to have become, had she guessed the name of her former "friend," his relationship to her future mistress, or his residence in that house. Mark me, reader, I had nothing of which to accuse myself as to Susan, and resolved that I would *not* have. What had been venial and *venal* too, under other auspices, would have been seriously unbecoming now and here.

Judge then my embarrassment as I judged that of the girl, while her lady, in blest unconscious naïveté, said—

"Now, Susan, put on your bonnet, for as soon as you have taken away the things, you will go to Bristol with your master."

“Are we to be turned out together?” those blue eyes seemed to say.

But her mistress went on—“Yes, go with Mr. Hill, Susan, where he will take you, and do as he bids you; he wishes you to transact some little business for him, and when he has taught you how and where, you can do the same for any of the other young gentlemen when he is gone.”

Luckily none other of the young gentlemen knew why I bit my lip. ‘Go with Susan I must, by parental command, and go I did; but, as soon as we got without the walls, said to the now crying and fluttered soubrette—

“Wilcox, fear nothing from me! I shall take my place for London instantly, and start to-morrow morning, without betraying what I know to any body; keep your own secret; by finding you in service I hope you intend to lead a steady life; at any rate, quit your present situation rather than disgrace it. You will hear when I am again expected home; then you *must* make some pretext for leaving, as I won’t return till you are off, and shall be wanted back in a few months; so buy yourself a riband, and dry your eyes.”

I think it will be owned I told no falsehood in asserting that *duty* called me away. There are dangers from which ’tis brave to fly.

Susan behaved so well, that, in a short time, she

was recommended to a spinster who needed a confidential attendant; perhaps an easier and more profitable, certainly a safer post, than that which my mother had assigned her, about my person. I never saw her more; and do not record this as a Joseph-like boast. There is "consistency in sinning"—"a time for all things:" a man may avoid violating bonds obviously sacred, without any cant of good taste and gentlemanly feeling.

Once more in London, need I say I visited the theatres? Harlequin Gulliver was the pantomime at Covent Garden, and, since the days of the far-famed Mother Goose, no entertainment of the kind had afforded such general satisfaction; from the dear little rogues home for the holidays, to children of a larger growth, all ranks were enchanted. I do not blush to confess myself one of the latter, on this and many other occasions.

It is impossible for those who never had the happiness of seeing Joe Grimaldi, "every body's Joe," to form a correct idea of the unceasing humour of his acting; however grotesque or ludicrous the situation, you could not but perceive that the artist was a man of first-rate genius. Like many established favourites, he could play a very fantastic trick, and still there was "no offence in't!" The gorgeous palace of Lilliput was enveloped in flames; very little firemen, with very small engines, hastened

to the spot ; Joe knew his author, and, in proof of this, placed the whizzing water-pipe in such a position as to realize the actual manner in which the conflagration was subdued ; yet this was done so skilfully, so neatly, that roars of laughter followed — loudest from those who recognized the Dean's own expedient.

CHAPTER IX.

MORE COLE—INNOCENT ADULTERY—MELPOMENE BEATS HER SISTERS—GAINING A NAME—THE CHARTERS OF OUR LAND—LOSING A NAME—LOW LIFE ABOVE STAIRS—THALIA TRAVELS—AN UNLUCKY TRIP—DUNDER AND BLITZEN—UPS AND DOWNS—LAST WORDS—DUKE FOR A DAY—KENT COMING TO DOVER—“COME I TOO LATE?”—BOTHERED ENTIRELY.

I WAS fortunate enough to encounter an old friend, as much given to play-going as myself, Cole of the Fusileers; and not an evening during my short stay in town but I accompanied him to one of the large houses. He was on half-pay, had determined to woo the Muses, informed me that he had nearly finished two volumes of essays, only wanting a little quiet and retirement to complete the undertaking. I invited him to my barrack-rooms at Dover, on the understanding that we were to share the housekeeping; an arrangement much more economical for him than living at the Hummums. He appeared delighted at the plan, and promised to avail himself of my offer.

With the prospect of enjoying the society of such a companion, I rejoined at Dover. Scarcely had I unpacked, and put my traps in order, when I received a request from Charlton Place, that I would enact the part of the Prior in Bertram, Mr. Dilnot having resigned the character, and given his Welsh wig to an old retainer.

Much against my inclination, I consented to study this charitable churchman, and, forewarned by the fate of my predecessor, took care that my head should be rendered as like the caput of a true son of holy church as possible.

In order to insure the complete success of the play, as far as regards each man knowing what had been set down for him, a rehearsal had taken place previous to my return; but as the lady of the house personated the heroine, her lord had carefully revised Maturin's language, and made the following important alteration —

“ We met in madness, *but we guiltless* parted.”

This purification turned the rest of the plot into gratuitous crime, and utter nonsense; but wise men will sometimes do silly things!

Although the excellent Mr. Dilnot had given up St. Anselm to my unworthy hands, he had not relinquished his amateur propensities. I witnessed, with great satisfaction, his representation of Frederick, in “ Lover's Vows,” for a charitable purpose,

at Canterbury; and beheld Kotzebue's boy-hero attired in the full regimentals of the West Kent Yeomanry Cavalry, whilst the head of the actor, over which sixty summers had passed, was dressed *à la militaire, bien poudré* with a most captivating little queue, that moved backward and forward, during the impassioned scenes, like a pendulum.

Valentine's day, instead of bringing me letters filled with hearts, darts, and the other commodities so plentiful on this love-making anniversary, was rendered agreeable by the arrival of my friend Cole. Due preparations had been made, and he found himself in a few minutes perfectly at home.

It was agreed that this day should be devoted to viewing the town, castle, &c.; but he would, positively, and in serious earnest, commence the completion of his task to-morrow. It came, and I left him seated in a room I had given up to his exclusive use, plentifully supplied with writing materials. We met at dinner-time—a cloud hung over the brow of my guest—I was on the point of asking what had occurred to annoy him, when suddenly he threw his knife and fork down, and exclaimed—

“By G—d, I'll not write another line of these d—d essays! I'll go on the stage.”

“The stage!” I cried; “in Heaven's name, how long has that crotchet crossed your brain?”

"I have thought of it for some time; my mind's made up; I must get an engagement directly. I'll open in Iago, or Sir Edward Mortimer. I feel certain of success. Fame, fortune, all lie before me; yes, I'll be an actor."

This was a sudden and startling resolve! That I did not consider it derogatory to a gentleman, my subsequent conduct proved; but might not some of Cole's relatives differ from me? was he of a *temper* to brook their prejudices, or to "rough it," in a provincial company? Then, Iago, Sir Edward Mortimer! my friend, though he well deserved the title of "little symmetry," lacked dignity, and had a thick, hurried enunciation, which, I feared, he would never get over. All this and more, as brotherly as I might, I stated. My observations were unheeded, the position was kept with a pertinacity which I could not conquer. It only remained for me to use what little interest I possessed to procure the required engagement, and to give my friend a *nom de théâtre*; the first I named hit his fancy; I pledged him in a bumper as "Mr. Calcraft," and from that moment he has been known by no other name.

With as strong a recommendation to Mr. Harry Dowton, the Canterbury manager, as I could indite, my newly christened godson left me next morning.

Amongst various valuable works of art, my neighbour, Colonel Ford, possessed a remarkably fine collection of Hogarth's works. We were expatiating on the numerous beauties of that "great moral satirist," and I was reminded of a curious question which had been asked in my presence, during the period that I served with Prince Augustus.

"You are of a very old family, sir," said a Prussian officer to Captain Chartres, of my own corps.

"Yes, sir, I have reason to believe so," was the reply.

"We have a portrait of one of your ancestors, at my house, near Berlin."

"Indeed! of what date?"

"I should say, to judge by the costume, a pretty distant one."

"Is it an oil picture, or a print?"

"It is an engraving, representing a Colonel Chartres, receiving from a stage waggon a young woman from the country, on whom he is about to bestow his charity and kindness. Are you descended from *that* Colonel Chartres, sir?"

"Heaven forbid! if I mistake not, he was hung, for bestowing too much of what he called kindness on some young woman."

The picture to which my Prussian friend alluded was the first in the series of the Harlot's Progress.

Before the month had waned, I received letters

from Calcraft, filled with the most satisfactory accounts of his success, pressing me to come and see him. Early in March I had an opportunity of so doing, Mr. Foote having promised the aid of the amateurs to the Canterbury manager, for what is called a stock night.

The well known and clever Dowton, having married a daughter of Mrs. (or as she was usually denominated, in the circuit, "Mother") Baker, her theatrical property had devolved on him, at her death; his London engagements rarely permitting his presence, a brother was deputed to represent him on the spot; but, though intrusted with a post of so much responsibility, such were the habits and manners of the locum tenens, so much devoted was he to dog-fights, bull-baits, trotting matches, free and casies, &c., &c., the London comedian had signified his wish that his dearly beloved brother would drop the paternal name, and adhere only to the sponsorial. The other, knowing how good a berth he enjoyed, and not being a very particular person, acquiesced in the arrangement; and, as "Mr. Harry," transacted all the multifarious business of the Canterbury, Maidstone, Faversham, and Tunbridge-wells theatres, to his own entire satisfaction, if not to that of his employer.

The absent and present managers were constantly

named by those under their control as "old Dow," and "old Harry." The latter was oftentimes as much dreaded as his satanic namesake.

But to the play. Mr. Foote had decided on "the Honey Moon;" with a lively recollection of my Dauphine Island display, in Juliana, I considered my luck and that of the drama much amended by my receiving the *rôle* of Rolando. Our farce was "High Life below Stairs." I need scarcely add that much of this amusing comedy depends on the supper scene. Our table, in the ordinary course of things, would certainly have been decorated with wooden fowls, brown paper ham, lamb's-wool creams, toast and water, or "that poor creature, small beer," in cracked decanters; but, Mr. Foote, with his usual liberality, supplied an allowance of choice wine, whilst I gave orders to dear Sally Smith, the pet pastry-cook of the garrison for many a long year, to send an ample quantity of poultry, tongue, jellies, and other knick-knacks; taking care that the substantials were ready carved, and duly garnished with parsley.

The time arrived for the discussion of these things. Philip took the head of the table; the ladies Charlotte and Bab, with their hostess, Mrs. Kitty, occupying posts of honour, and separating the Coachman, Kingston the black, with Chloe and the Cook, from those high-bred men, My Lord

Duke and Sir Harry. No sooner were the party seated, than a fierce attack was made on the viands by those who had not to sustain the dialogue of the scene; nay, some of *these* occasionally were hardly articulate, from the quantities crammed into their mouths.

Champagne had been placed in ice-pails; and, as representing the person of highest rank present, I challenged Mrs. Kitty to a bumper; the sparkling liquid flew round the table, to the delight of the supper-eaters and the envy of many among the audience.

The difference which arises between his Grace and Sir Harry, I was fortunate enough to heighten by calling on him for an explanation, with a flask of Champagne in my hand, and, seeing it was on the eve of explosion, kept him in parlance, close to the front of the stage, till the proper moment, when, levelling the bottle at him, off went the cork, with a crack that made the gormandisers jump and Sir Harry wince, for it struck him on the nose, with sufficient effect to draw involuntary tears from his eyes; the ladies interfered, smelling bottles were proffered, and the wounded Baronet speedily recovered.

Returning to the table, I could not but wonder at the complete disappearance of every morsel that was eatable; never surely had men and women dis-

patched a meal with such pleased alacrity. It was certainly a novelty on those boards to sit down to any thing real, and they had not failed to take swift advantage of the occasion.

The curtain fell amidst general plaudits, and, before I had time to strip off my ducal livery, I was accosted by a New Orleans friend, Sir Augustus D'Este, who renewed his acquaintance with great warmth, and with that winning manner, for which most members of the Royal family are celebrated.

The receipts of the theatre proved so far beyond the sum taken on ordinary occasions, that the leading lady of the company, Miss Barry, solicited, as a most special favour, the powerful assistance, as she was pleased to term it, of the amateurs. Our leader was far too gallant a man to refuse the request of a *fair* applicant.

Milman's tragedy of Fazio had been acted at Bath, and made a considerable sensation, though it had not yet received the stamp of metropolitan approbation. The literati of Canterbury were divided in their opinion as to the dramatic capabilities of the poem; it was resolved, therefore, to give them an opportunity of judging the production on the stage.

The characters were few; to oblige the fair *beneficière*, I undertook the part of the Duke, and

determined, in my robes of office, to vie with Lorenzo the Magnificent. Velvet, ermine, and satin were put in requisition, to form my princely garb ; and I had caused to be manufactured, from the most undoubted authority, a diadem of the exact form worn by the ruler of the Florentines ; 'tis true the materials were foil and gold-paper only, but my theatric zeal so entirely won the favour of a dear and kind friend, that her diamonds were lent me for the princely circlet, and by their aid a more splendid coronet was hardly seen on the brow of any Duke that lived. All parties concerned had sufficient reason to be satisfied with the results of the evening, the lady for whose benefit the performance was intended most especially ; she could not credit the statement made by the manager, who was also the money-taker, that the receipts amounted to the unheard-of sum of £97 12s.

Calcraft, who I perceived took a great interest in her affairs, laughingly remarked :—

“It would have been a hundred, but you can't prevent old Harry from *chiselling* you out of something ; he has not had such an opportunity since he has been Chancellor of Dow's Exchequer.”

The success which had attended our dramatic exertions stimulated the officers at Shorncliffe and Hythe to try their histrionic powers ; to strengthen their forces, the Charlton Place amateurs were re-

quested to join their ranks ; and a friendly union was speedily completed, in the cause of charity.

The first play at Hythe had given great satisfaction ; the gentry, both in town and neighbourhood, were anxiously looking out for another. I happened to call on an officer of the Invalid Artillery, close to the town, and was pleased to hear both Colonel and Mrs. N—— express their unqualified approbation of our performance.

“ I hope,” said the lady, “ you mean to let us have a lively farce, to send us home in good humour ; have you fixed on what is to be done next ?”

“ The play is not yet decided, my dear Ma’am,” I replied, “ I *can* name the after-piece ; it is a sterling work of the old school, and one which cannot fail to please every body.”

“ Indeed ! what is it ?”

“ Ways and Means, or a Trip to Dover.”

The lady jumped up, her face crimsoned to her forehead, and, with a bounce, that gave me some doubts of her sanity, rushed out of the room.— The Colonel, too, looked confused, but I was “ as innocent as a sucking dove” of any intention thus to disturb their equanimity. Finding that nothing I could say in praise of Colman’s capital petite comedy tended to soothe the feelings of my host, I hastily concluded my visit, and left the house won-

dering what possible cause of offence the naming of *Ways and Means* could have given.

I was not long kept in the dark, but learnt, from undoubted authority, that the character of Sir David had been faithfully copied from old Biggs, the Ordnance Storekeeper at Dover; and that the present Mrs. N——, of sensitive exit, was his daughter, one of the Miss Dunders! Whether Random or Scruple was intended for Colonel N——, I never thought it worth while to inquire; but this I know, that, on the evening the obnoxious farce was acted, the theatre was not graced by the presence of the colonel or his lady.

A valued friend of mine, Captain Pemberton, of the Rifle Brigade, called on me one May morning, to request that I would accompany his uncle, Sir Charles Wale, and himself, over the castle and works. I hastened to assure the General how happy I should be to act as *Cicerone*, and we set off, to view the various objects so worthy the notice of a military man.

I apprised Sir Charles that an extensive view was to be obtained from a particular point of the Castle cliff, if he would take the pains of stooping under a barrier that had been placed to prevent strangers from approaching the spot, which was considered dangerous. To this proposition he as-

sented, and we were much charmed with the splendid prospect presented to us.

We had advanced to the extreme edge of the precipice, when, turning to his nephew, the General said—

“Anthony, this spot reminds me of a circumstance which occurred many years ago, when I was a subaltern at Gibraltar ; my most intimate friend was on the Rock Mortar guard, I had ascended to his station, to beguile his day’s exile, and visit the posts with him. We suddenly arrived at a point of the Rock more than a thousand feet above the sea ; he looked over with an air as calm, nay, calmer than mine is now, for the recollection makes me shudder — ‘Wale,’ said he, ‘d’ye think a fellow would suffer much pain, if he were to fall from this tremendous elevation?’—‘I should imagine not,’ I replied ; ‘he would be hardly conscious of any thing — more than half dead before he reached the base. It must be an easy death.’—‘You think so,’ he said, and smiled. ‘Farewell then, my dear fellow ;’ in an instant he sprung from the edge, and was lost to my sight.”

Pemberton and myself exchanged significant looks, implying that we could have wished Sir Charles had chosen a more secure spot for the narration of an event so startling. Association of ideas, in a *locale* so similar to the scene of this tra-

gedy, almost induced a kind of giddiness; for my part I do not hesitate to confess that I crept very cautiously back to the barrier, nor did I think myself safe till I had attained the opposite side of it. Pemberton speedily followed, and, as our companion rose from stooping beneath the bar, his nephew instantly asked—

“For God’s sake, why did you abruptly tempt a nervous subject, like myself? Heaven pardon me! I felt the most extraordinary inclination to follow the example of the poor youngster; what could have caused him to seek so sudden and dreadful a death?”

“That was never known; his family were rich and respectable, and he was neither in love nor in debt, two powerful reasons for jumping out of the world; it could only be attributed to insanity, or to the unaccountable impulse you have just confessed yourself, which is more frequently felt than proved, or even owned, by persons of excitable temperaments.”

What Sir Charles had said relative to the extinction of life being the effect of a fall from any considerable height was a universal opinion, at the time; contradicted, however, by the well-known fact that, when Madame Blanchard had fallen from a balloon, nearly half a mile from the earth, and alighted on the roof of a house, she was heard to

exclaim, "Oh mon Dieu !" —nay, although speechless afterwards, was perfectly conscious of all around, for the brief period that she survived.

On the 5th of June, his Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Michael landed, under a salute from the batteries, and was received by the Commandant with all due honours. His Highness remained at the Ship only time enough to partake of refreshments, and to allow the landing of his carriages. Shortly, all was prepared for departure. Of these unwieldy vehicles which were to bear him and his suite to town, an open landau was the first in the order of march ; into this stepped an ugly little fellow, with fiery red hair, and enormous moustache ; he was buttoned up in a dark green surtout, decorated with a cross or two, the reward of the services he had rendered his Imperial master, in his capacity of —valet.

Crosses and medals are matters more profusely bestowed by the Russian than by any other power. Three or four carriages contained the personal staff of the illustrious Muscovite ; a small mean-looking calèche, in the rear of the rest, was occupied by the Duke and an elderly gentleman of prepossessing appearance.

A line of soldiers had been formed in front of the hotel, to keep off the *bourgeois* ; part of this cordon fell back to allow the passage of the car-

riages ; the mob, anxious to welcome the Royal Stranger, were uproarious in their shouts ; all eyes were turned upon the valet, whom they mistook for the object of their admiration, as he led the van ; they ran by the side of his carriage, huzzaing as though they had never seen a carroty man, who looked like a Tom cat, before. The little Tartar received their salutations with immense condescension, bowed, lifted his casquet, smiled, put his hand to his heart, whilst the vehicle which brought up the rear was, with its occupants, totally disregarded by the wiseacres.

At the request of several influential ladies of Dover, the Hythe Amateurs gave their aid in behalf of the Lying-in Charity of the former place ; whether or no any of the actors had cause to feel a particular interest in the Institution I know not ; but the fact of a set of gay young fellows coming forward to assist females who had the straw in perspective, drew a large audience, and mainly benefited the funds of the Charity.

Soon after this performance, I was placed in a situation of considerable perplexity, from receipt of news, that his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent was expected to arrive in Dover every hour ; consequently my presence was necessary for the superintending salutes, &c. ; whilst I was pledged to my

comrades to play Ollapod, at Hythe, that very evening,

Our dramatic company did not boast of any gentleman "who would kindly undertake the part, at a short notice, relying on the usual indulgence;" if I did not join them, the play must be postponed; it were impossible to cut out so important a personage as the apothecary; how I fretted and fumed, walking up and down my barrack room, torn to pieces by the conflicting passions of loyalty and love of acting. Five o'clock came, and I gave myself up to despair. The "Poor Gentleman" himself could not have suffered more misery than it was my lot to bear; in the very height of my agony, Colonel Ford, who knew how I was situated, came into my room with the tidings that our Royal visiter would not arrive that night, but begged me to return to barracks after the play. I could almost have hugged the dear kind Colonel for the reprieve. To order a chaise from the Ship, to place my portmanteau within it, and to jump in after it, "was the work of a moment." Only eleven miles separated Hythe from Dover.

"Postboy, drive 'as if the Devil was after you, and you shall have no cause for regret."

Off went the chaise, round went the wheels.

Up hill and down dale, along I was rattled, at a pace that, under any other circumstances, would

have been terrific; and, by dint of whip and spur, found myself safely landed at the Swan, before half past six.

My brother actors, hearing the chaise drive up, rushed to the window, and no sooner saw me dismount, than they welcomed me with a loud huzza.

“ I knew he'd come if he was alive,” cried one.

“ What has kept you ? ” said another.

“ We were just going to post up a notice of the performance being put off.”

“ I'll answer you all, by and by, let's hasten to the Theatre. Waiter, send me down some strong green tea, and tell the postboy I shall want him to go back at eleven; keep him sober, but take care of him.”

Under the disadvantage of playing without a rehearsal, I managed to get through the disciple of Galen and votary of Mars tolerably well. In the after-piece of “ Botheration,” I was to enact Doctor Wisepate, who clears up “ a ten years' blunder,” but, in my anxiety to fulfill the desire expressed by my kind commandant, I forgot this last scene, and hastened back to quarters.

When the denouement should have taken place, there was no Wisepate to set them right; in vain they called for me. I afterwards learnt that such a specimen of anarchy was seldom if ever witnessed;

neither audience nor actors knowing how it would end ; but, after ineffectual struggles at elucidation, the curtain fell upon as fine a bit of “botheration” as heart could desire.

To amateur acting, and for a charity, this was but a charm the more, a crowning grace, “a finishing one.” Had such an exit spread confusion through a professional company, no matter how *well* its members had played, they would have been hissed for the deserter’s fault, and he must have expected his discharge.

CHAPTER X.

THE MAT — AN ECCENTRIC STAR — DEATH IN THE CASTORS —
ALL'S RIGHT — WHO'LL SHOOT ME? — AN INEXORABLE AIM —
BALL-PROOF — WOOLWICH PLAYS — "THE SILVER LINK" —
"THE SILKEN TIE."

IT was with extreme delight I learnt that the inimitable imitator Mathews was about to appear at our Theatre. I felt "a most ardent desire to be made known to him, and the wish was speedily gratified. I had long enjoyed the acquaintance of Mr. Trotter, the proprietor of the Hythe theatre, and to him I was indebted for an introduction to the son of Momus, on the 25th day of the rosy month of June.

Mathews quickly perceived that I was in earnest, when I assured him of the great happiness I felt in becoming acquainted with him ; and, although he was usually reserved with strangers, he proved the exception he had made in my favour, by accepting an invitation to dine with me the following day.

I despatched a note to Shorncliffe, asking my intimate friend, Pemberton, of the Rifle Corps, to

meet the famed comedian; and called on Colonel Marlay with the same request. He was charmed with the opportunity offered him, of seeing, in private life, a man who had afforded him such exquisite delight in public.

Many months before the period of which I am now speaking, I had attended a sale at the Custom House, and purchased some odd lots of Claret, which had been seized in quantities as small as two or three bottles. Judging that nobody would take the trouble of attempting to evade duties for any other than drinkable wine, I bought all that was going, and, by the advice of Mr. Sampson, the Comptroller, stowed away my purchase in a deep bed of sea-sand. No fitter occasion could occur for trying the quality of the wine than the present.

My chief guest having to give his "At Home," it was arranged that our dinner hour should be an early one. Pemberton arrived full of joy at my having given him the preference on a day which promised so much gratification.

Punctual to the moment, Messrs. Mathews and Trotter entered the fort, were made known to the two militaires, and, in a few minutes, were seated to the best fare my means could offer them.

Mathews was in one of his most amiable moods, in spite of which he gave me "a spice of his quality." Asking Turner for some fish sauce, various

bottles, containing Harvey, Reading, Chili, Anchovy, &c., were handed him.

“I don’t see any catchup,” he said, looking my man full in the face, with an expression which did not indicate disappointment.

“Master never uses it,” was the honest reply of the blunt servitor.

“I honour your master for it, and *you* ought to honour your master for taking care that his guests are not killed;” then, turning to Colonel Marlay, he continued; “I couldn’t enjoy a mouthful of this excellent salmon, if I thought there was such a thing in the house as that abominable villanous stuff they *call* Mushroom Catchup. God knows what they make it of, but it is a most dangerous and deadly poison.”

“And yet,” said Trotter, “I’ve seen you eat mushrooms.”

“Ah! they are very different things; that’s what I would have said, if you had only taken the trouble to listen to me, and hear me out; there is not one *solitary* mushroom in *all* the catchup ever sold by Burgess, Shout, Lazenby, or any other pickle-man in London.”

A piece of roast beef, which took place of the fish, was no sooner set on table, than Mathews began —

“I knew it, I was sure of it; the moment I heard

you didn't use catchup, I was convinced you were a man after my own heart. If there be a thing on earth that I like better than every other dish in the world — it's roast beef. I could live on it all the year round ! let those who will eat those fowls and tongue, delicately white or rosy red as they look, give me beef. What do *you* eat, when you are going to act, *en amateur* ?" he asked me.

" Any thing that falls in my way, my mind is so occupied by my character that I am indifferent to any other consideration."

" Now take my advice ; if ever you have a long difficult part, order roast beef ; try it, that's all, and if you don't find out the difference I'm no judge."

Oh ! that I could give his manner, whilst I am recording the matter — there was an earnestness in all he said, as though he addressed you on the most important subject.

" Mr. Mathews, some apple-tart ?" said Pemberton.

" No, thank you, Captain ; bilious head-ache and heartburn I don't volunteer for."

" Some macaroni ?"

" What ? macaroni ! well, I see how it is, you must have found out, by some means, quite mysterious to me, the food I like most."

" Why, Mathews," exclaimed Mr. Trotter, " how

often have I heard you execrate these "tobacco pipes made easy," as you called them, as reminding you of —— but I won't repeat your Long Acre allusion."

"Mine! never!" returned Mathews, as if he had been falsely accused of high treason; "Trotter, I have the highest regard for your memory and veracity, in general; but, if you have mixed *me* up, in your imagination, with any nasty brute capable of *such* a comparison, I shall never forgive you."

"'Tis plain you know what *I meant*, at least," laughed Trotter.

"Nonsense!" broke in Mathews, "I know I always *did*, and always *shall* hold macaroni 'in my heart of hearts, as I do thee;' so, 'no more of that Tom, an thou lov'st me;'" then turning to me, he continued, "I have it; somebody, who has dined with me in town has said, 'if ever that queer fellow, Mathews, is your visiter, give him nothing but roast beef, with a dish of macaroni, and be sure to hide the catchup-castor, and make your servant *swear* you never use it.'"

"I am only too happy that our tastes accord, believe me."

"Thank you, a little wine? Here again, another proof — that's as honest a glass of Madeira as ever man drank, and yet there are a parcel of fools, idiots, beasts! that pretend to vote Madeira un-

fashionable — acid, and the devil knows what ; I'd have such caitiffs drink nothing but ditch-water, and that none of the cleanest."

The dinner passed, and I was anxious to obtain the opinions of my visitors on my small bin of claret. Selecting four of the best looking bottles, I had caused them to be kept in water (ice was not to be procured) during the whole of the morning.

Fate seemed determined to smile on me, the wine was pronounced excellent. Mathews drank sparingly, but, as none of the party had his responsibility, we broached a queer-looking specimen, which proved to be Burgundy, of first-rate quality and in high condition. The moment Colonel Marlay spoke in its praise, Mathews opened upon me again—

"Burgundy and claret ! Forgive my asking, but what do the colonels and majors of the Artillery drink ? because I should think if they increase their wine-cellars with their promotion, that they used Tokay to make blacking with. I beg pardon, I don't mean to say any thing unpleasant ; on the contrary, allow me to observe, I could not have had a better dinner if I had been dining at the commander-in-chief's table, and you deserve to live well, if only for your sensible hatred to catchup."

Our little party was obliged to break up early, to allow Mathews to fulfil his professional duties.

We soon followed him to the theatre, and it was extremely gratifying to me to perceive that he was in tip-top spirits, and good voice. At the end of a most fatiguing song, he turned towards the box in which our party was seated, and, his face beaming with good-humour, cried out "Roast beef!" in such a tone of triumph that made me bless my stars for having provided the dish that he did love to feed upon.

I have before related how completely my friend Colonel Ford succeeded in puzzling a conjuror.* I am now about to mention a circumstance connected with a brother of the black art, on which occasion the tables were turned. An Indian juggler, calling himself Khia Khan, Khruse, announced a display of several extraordinary feats, and the colonel asked me to accompany him to see the mighty magician. I am not about to tell all the odd things he did, in the way of stone and sword swallowing, but confine myself to one trick, the performance of which, up to this hour, is a sealed mystery to me — a deed of evident confederation with the Evil One!

During the entertainment a pistol was handed round for inspection, the Indian requesting, in as good English as he could muster, that some gentleman would load it with powder *and* bullet, also paraded, and fire at Khan at fourteen paces, Khia pledging himself to catch the ball in his tawny fist.

* Vide Recollections of an Artillery Officer, vol. i., page 157.

There was a general disinclination to make the experiment, when Colonel Ford said—

“Please to understand, Mr. Conjuror, that, when the pistol is loaded, it is not given back to your hands, but, as soon as the powder and ball are put in, you are to stand the shot.”

“Iss, Saib ! I catch him — he no hurt — you mark bully—den you know him ’gain.”

We carefully examined the weapon ; there was no false chamber into which the ball could fall, the powder was genuine Pigott and Andrews, and the

“Bullets were made of lead, lead, lead !”

Instead of contenting himself with the ordinary nick or cross upon the ball, the Colonel carefully cut “a broad R,” or arrow, the mark which distinguishes his Majesty’s naval and military stores. I loaded, and, as sailors say, “rammed home wad, shot, and cartridge,” then offered the charged tube to my companion, who declined with a smile—

“No, my dear boy, *you* shall have the honour of shooting the fellow ; take a good aim at him, and mind the chandelier.”

Seeing matters in such an active state of preparation, the ladies began to evince alarm, and many a sweet voice implored me to abandon the notion of firing ; whether out of respect to their own nerves, or the conjuror’s carcase, I know not, but I remained most ungallantly deaf to their prayers.

“Him Saib ready?” demanded the Asiatic.

Signifying assent, I asked him where he meant to stand, that I might step out the number of paces agreed on.

“I tan here, you no fright, if kill me I forgive, but me catch de ball, and no debil in it!”

The pit of the theatre was floored over, and I counted out the fourteen steps between me and my willing victim.

“All ready, sar!” cried whitey-brown.

I took a deliberate aim at his body, and, I almost blush to confess, with a certainty of seeing him fall dead from the shot, as no deception had been practiced in the loading. The ladies held their hands to their ears, the trigger was pulled, and “ping!” went the bullet, if ever I heard a bullet fly through the air. Khia Khan gave a leap, which I thought was the effect of his death-wound, and then advanced, showing his fine set of teeth to the greatest possible advantage, with his right hand clenched, saying:—

“Him got him! what him mark?”

“The broad R.”

“Ah, me no know what Saib mean, him dis, I tink;” and, opening his palm, there lay the identical piece of lead so carefully marked by the colonel.

Thunders of applause followed this extraordinary

display ; the danger ¹past, even the ladies joined in expressing their unqualified delight at having witnessed so wonderful a trick. I turned to my companion ; he appeared somewhat disconcerted, and said to me—

“ If that fellow were to offer to be rammed into Queen Elizabeth’s pocket-pistol at the castle, for the purpose of obtaining an expeditious passage to Calais, I would n’t allow the powder to be served out for the purpose, for, from what I have just witnessed, I think that in a minute after you had put the port-fire to the vent, he’d be walking in the *Place*, without one gunpowder spot on his muslin. I say we’ve seen quite enough, let’s go home !”

Taking the earliest opportunity, we retreated, to the extreme regret of many present, who intended to favour us with a profusion of questions relative to this shooting bout at the end of the performance.

Adhering to events, as they actually occurred, I find that this chapter will be almost entirely devoted to matters theatrical ; still, what I am about to mention is of a nature too flattering to my vanity to be omitted. About the middle of August I received a letter from my valued friend Barlow, apprizing me that the officers of Woolwich had of late got up some plays, in aid of the charities of the town, and

the Regimental Orphan Fund. I confess I was surprised at this information, remembering that when I was quartered there, the then "Big wigs" would have discountenanced any such relaxation from drill and guard mounting; but my surprise was not equal to my pleasure, when, on continuing the perusal of the letter, I found a most flattering invitation to visit head-quarters, and give my aid to the dramatic exhibitions.

I will not quote the civil things that were said to induce my visit, but say at once I was delighted at the prospect of a "Starring engagement," and wrote by return, signifying how readily I should embrace the opportunity of meeting so many old friends.

Before a week had elapsed I found myself in the comfortable quarters of the hospitable and warm-hearted Barlow, and was shortly after introduced to the members of the Dramatic Corps; many of them I had known in former days, and with the others I soon became acquainted.

The receipts being devoted to the benevolent purpose of cheering the fatherless, "The Cure for the Heart Ache" was by no means an inappropriate title to select, nor was the name of the farce out of keeping; many a full-dress rehearsal had taken place on the barrack-field; we had only to change the "Waggeries" from "Windsor" to Wool-

wich, and take care that the evening's representation did not interfere with the real "Review" which was performed once a week during the summer season by his Majesty's servants.

Mrs. Lazenby, Mrs. Fawcett, (sisters of Mrs. Orger) and Mrs. Lamb, were our *colaborateuses*. Truefit wigged us, Lee found the "Costumey" as he called it, and thus aided, we played to a house crammed to the ceiling.

Where all did their best, it might appear invidious to particularize; but I cannot refrain from noticing one of our amateurs, Dr. Whitelaw. Blessed with a phiz in which the eyes of Munden, the nose of Liston, and the mouth of Grimaldi, all blended in harmony, no wonder that he succeeded as a comedian. I have seldom seen a more perfect piece of acting than his old Rapid, and could not help telling him that, should he ever quarrel with the gallipots at home, or the tourniquets abroad, a career was open to him, which, if I had the slightest judgment, must realize both fame and fortune.

The committee who conducted these charity-plays were pleased to express their wish that I would perform on the next occasion, which I cheerfully promised, and took leave of my Woolwich friends.

On my return I found the Royal Sovereign

Yacht lying off the quay, waiting to convey His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent to the Continent. Finding, amongst the officers of this magnificent vessel, two or three old acquaintance, I went on board to offer my services, if at any time they wished to visit the castle or citadel. In return I was pressed to dine with them; and as I knew that my acceptance of their "invite" would not incur any expense to my hosts, as the Board of Green Cloth supplied the table, I accepted their kindness. Never had I seen reefers fare like gentlemen before, that is, on board ship; no black jacks, or broken crockery, no dirty negro boy as head waiter, but a table supplied with all the elegancies of "shore-going" people.

I presume the quantity of plate which graced the board suggested the creation of titles unknown to the College of Heralds, but, that my reader may clearly understand the origin of these new dignities, I must premise that, during the time the yacht had been in port, and she had entered the harbour many days before my return, the officers had amused themselves by lounging about the streets and Orange Walk, casting sheep's eyes at every pretty girl they saw; at length one of them discovered the face of a lady he had met at a relative's in town, lost no time in renewing his acquaintance, was formally introduced to her "Ma

and sisters," who were invited to visit the Royal Sovereign; and, so highly delighted were the fair ones at their reception on board, that the whole mess were asked, to an evening party given by the mamma, at the urgent solicitation of the four Miss D——s, to "those very gentlemanly nice young men of the King's Yacht."

The amiability of the young ladies, the good cheer of their honoured parent, could not fail to produce effect on hearts so soft as those usually found under a sailor's jacket. The only one of the party who was not over head and ears in love with these charining girls was the Doctor; he laughed at their die-away declarations, and their vows of eternal constancy to women they* had known a few hours only, and whom they were sure to leave in a few hours more. Too polite to affix any vulgar name to these sighing Strephons, the Doctor hit on the expedient of granting them honorary distinctions, whilst the party assembled, waiting for dinner. He informed them that, as he perceived they all belonged to the Order of Spoons, he should assign each man his proper distinction; selecting the youngest, Lord E——H——, whose condition was the most desperate, he appointed him Knight Grand Soup Ladle, the next in succession Knight Grand Gravy Spoon, two were installed Commanders of the Table Spoon, the others Companions of the

Spoon ; each newly created knight was forced to wear his insignia during dinner, to the utter dismay of the steward, who began to have serious fears as to the safety of the plate-chest ; seeing its contents so strangely misapplied, I could not help thinking when I saw these young men thus oddly decorated, what a scene would have occurred had Sir Edward Owen, the commander of the yacht, entered the cabin unannounced ; and how, in their attempts at excuse for their innocent folly, they would have merited to the full the title of Spoonneys. The chapter of the order was broken up on the 6th of September, by the arrival of the Duke. Colonel Ford introduced me to His Royal Highness, who received me with the greatest kindness, and I enjoyed the honour of an hour's conversation with him (walking up and down the deck) principally on military subjects ; I left his presence, charmed with his urbanity, and gratified with the information I had derived from his communications. With the air of a soldier there was blended so much of the kind-hearted man, as to create affection as well as respect ; although his manners and conversation inspired confidence by their simplicity and elegance, yet you never lost sight of the dignity of the Prince.

Towards the end of the month my friend Warde paid Dover a visit, on a theatrical speculation ; he

had, during the summer, established himself as a favourite in London, by his performances at the Haymarket; and thus honoured by metropolitan approbation, was now on a tour in the provinces. We talked over old scenes with great satisfaction, and I did my utmost to secure him a good house on his benefit. My presence was again required at Woolwich, and during my journey, I heard from one of my fellow-travellers the facts on which I built the story that forms the subject of my next chapter, though the occurrences carry us back some years previous to my personal narrative.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TOPICS OF THE DAY—FRENCH AND ENGLISH—THE DEPARTURE—CALLED ON TO STAND—FIRE!—SECOND TABLE AMBITION—MORE GLORIOUS THAN SAFE—A FOAMING TANKARD—THE FOX CAUGHT—A PERSPICUOUS ORATOR—OFFERS OF KEEPING COMPANY—A RATting VALET—THE GREAT NON-SUITED—ORDERS TO MARCH—THE DEVIL AMONG THE TAILORS—QUOTE HIM DOWN BARDOLPH!

“WHAT, again looking out upon the sea!” was the exclamation of Lord G——, on entering the drawing-room, and perceiving one of his most honoured guests gazing with evident anxiety on the turbulent waves that flowed between the Kentish chalk cliffs and the dimly-seen headlands of France. “What, in the name of all that is diplomatic, do you expect from the opposite side? Some secret communications, the last Moniteur, or an overture from Buonaparte to create you Duke of Normandy?”

“My dear Lord,” replied the gentleman questioned, “something much more important than

all these—on the arrival of which more depends than I dare breathe even to you. In the morning I must bid farewell to all the charms of W——, your kind hospitality, your spacious library, and the advantage of your society. If I do not sleep in Downing Street to-morrow I'm a lost man; I will tax your friendship so far as to beg you will take no further notice of my restlessness, and permit me to have private audience with any one who may arrive during the day. Surely I shall not be disappointed, if I am—what an object of ridicule, nay of insult, I shall be to the opposite faction. It blows a tempest, it is true, but boats *have* crossed in worse weather. I'll vex myself no longer."

Saying this, the newly appointed Secretary of State, for he was no less a personage, drew a chair to the fire, and entered into an animated conversation with his noble and intelligent host, on the aspect of European affairs, and the extraordinary changes likely to ensue, from the death of the great man whose hand, for so long a time, had held the helm of state. We will not be guilty of a breach of confidence, and recount the conversation, but hasten to detail facts.

A large party surrounded the dinner table—diversified topics were discussed—the Boulogne flotilla, and the difficulty of getting genuine Bologna sausages—Napoleon's Pillar, and Sheridan's bet as to

whether the Monument would fall up or down Fish Street Hill—Talleyrand's policy, and Perigord pies—Erskine's elevation to the Wool-sack, and the advantage of the cross of Merinoes with our South-downs.

I know not which of these subjects occupied the party, when a servant entered, and whispered to the Minister something which caused him to jump from his seat, and involuntarily exclaim — “She's come, now I am happy.” Then, without pausing to apologize for leaving his companions, he hastily quitted the room.

That the arrival was feminine created sundry smirks and sneers on the countenances of some of the elders present; and one young gentleman, who, though in training for a diplomatic situation, was not too deeply read in ancient or modern history, fell into a reverie as to what possible influence a woman could exert over affairs of state.

By the way, in after years his own destiny convinced him that ladies are often important agents even in political preferments, for he married the natural daughter of Earl ——, and got the place for which he had sighed so long.

But to return to our great man, as he returned to the dinner-room, a smile of satisfaction lighting up his dark complexion; his massy brows freed from the load of care which appeared to have sent them

half way down the bridge of his nose during the day.

No one ventured to ask him if it were a French Grammar or Pronouncing Dictionary which he had thus obtained ; though, while in Paris, some years before, he had endeavoured to disabuse the unfortunate Louis of his “ prejudices,” by the edifying appeal of “ *Otez tout cela hors de votre tête, dans la première place.*”

The language of France was, at that period, but little understood in England, least so by the party to which this great man was leader ; perhaps even his personal peculiarities secured him against that quality and degree of envy which vents itself in deriding trifles. A later statesman’s *bad French* was mercilessly quizzed ; but then, in every *other* respect, he contrasted my present theme, and ladies, who had failed to win him as a lover, betrayed their pique by ridiculing him as a linguist. “ The slightest speck is seen on snow.”

Happily our beetle-brow’d one resumed his place at the board. Blest in a valet *au fait* at all the necessary preparations for his sudden journeys and early departures, the master, in the unexplained joy of his heart, uttered a thousand drolleries ; and, for a Secretary for Foreign Affairs, made himself completely at home. Wine was passing freely, and he did imbibe somewhat. It

was evident that with *him* the grapes were not sour, for he caroused till the second cock.

Next morning the travelling chariot was at the door of W—— betimes. The valet of the departing visiter was observed to come stealthily forth, and place an official-looking packet, secured with those true signs of importance, red tape and large seals, in the seat of the carriage. Shortly afterwards its owner appeared, evidently suffering from the effects of the last evening's revelry ; his beard, darker even than that by which a noted pirate was recognised, had not been subjected to the usual routine of lather and razor ; his cheeks were pale, which gave an almost ogre-like expression to his eyes, peering from beneath those fearfully heavy brows before named ; yet, unkempt and unshaven as he was, he still bore about him the unmistakable air of a gentleman, ay, and of a man used to command, whose dictum was law.

With the master snugly ensconced inside, and the valet, defended by great coats against the cold sea-mist of a February morning, away drove the equipage ; reaching the small village of Lydden, it fairly entered the high Dover road. The slow pace in which it ascended the hill to the half-way house had produced upon our hero that inclination to doze, which some travellers seem so anxious to court, if one may judge by the night-caps in which they envelop their features.

To the *lone* traveller a nap may be pardoned ; but I always hoped that bumped heads and stiff necks might reward my *fellow* - passengers who adopted such unsociable arrangements.

The wheels flew over Barham Downs, the mist had cleared, and the valet, loosening the huge shawl that covered his face and throat, looked round upon the prospect ; as he turned back he perceived, in the distance, a horseman, spurring on his steed at a notable rate. “ Mr. Brush ” thought it advisable to look at his pistols, — he did not like to apprise his master of his suspicions, but determined to show fight, should occasion demand the expenditure of powder and ball.

Urging the postillions to their utmost speed—he felt *superior* in prowess to

“ Richard who robbed the Lion of his heart ”—

he towered *above* the *dickey*. The pursuer evidently gained ground, and, as he rode upon the greensward of the down, instead of the flint and chalk compound on which the vehicle rolled, he soon came abreast of it, though some feet above the road. In a loud voice the horseman exclaimed “ Stop ! ” but ere he could add the expected— “ Your money or your life ! ” nay, ere he had time to articulate, “ Deliver ! ” bang went the pistol of the valorous valet—horse and man fell headlong on the sward.

“ In the name of —— ” were the only audible words which the prostrate man uttered—whether it was “ Heaven,” “ Wonder,” or “ Abershaw,” which “ he would have said ”—the rapid movement of the carriage did not allow his victor time to ascertain.

The smoke from his weapon had scarcely blown away, when the grim visage of his honoured master peered on him from the window, hastily demanding the cause which had so suddenly aroused him from his slumbers.

“ Let me beg you, sir, to wait till we reach Canterbury ; I will explain all there ; but pray draw up the glass, and don’t expose yourself to the cold.”

The statesman took this acceptable advice, and his faithful servant, gazing back to the spot of his late rencontre, saw the man upon his feet, but the horse still stretched along the grass.

“ On foot the rascal can’t overtake us ! we shall reach Bridge in a few moments, and then I defy his wicked attempt to rob the best master that ever sat to be puffed. Lucky for him I knew something about gunpowder as well as Mareschal, hair triggers as well as hair dressing. Who knows but that single shot has prevented a change in the cabinet ? — I certainly should like to find out what news master got from France last night, when that old

woman came to Lord G——'s, whispering that she had something of the greatest consequence to say; and then that square packet, which master sealed, and tied up with his own hands, oddly enough marked "Private," and directed to himself. Ah, well! I shall be let into a few state secrets now *we* are in office; I do flatter myself that I shall have a trifle more attention paid me at the Rockingham Arms, when next I visit our little society there. Never shall I forget the black looks of the Duke of N——'s coachman, when he was told, as he tried to join us, that gentlemen in livery were not admitted.

"This Highwayman affair won't be a bad thing for me, if master mentions it to any of his colleagues; for they'll tell their wives, the ladies their maids, and so it will get talked of from the second table to the scullery. Yet, now it's over, I'm glad I didn't kill the fellow; only 'pinked him, 'pon honour,' as I heard somebody say, the other night, at the little theatre."

These sweet suggestions of self-love filled the bold heart of the outsider, until the carriage, with its more valued inside freight, reached the Fountain, in the ancient, picturesque, goodly, and godly city of Canterbury.

The master summoned the man to his presence, learnt what might have befallen him, gracing his

proper appreciation of the benefit conferred on himself and his country by good-humoured eulogies on the skilful and judicious aim of his trusty body guard and body servant.

Of course the postillions trumpeted forth the adventure of their "turn;" though one, a boy of some fifty-four, with a knowing leer at the hero of the fray, said—

"Well, muster, you seems pretty pleased with yourself about that ere shooting business; all I hope is that you may n't hear no more on't; but 'tis my belief, some how, that you *will*, and in a way not quite to your mind, for I turned my head over my near shoulder, and got a sight of the man you killed, and my notion is that 'twas Muster——"

"Here, sir," answered the hero of the pistol to the well known voice of his master, who, as he entered the carriage, called to him to take his place.

Not stopping to hear the name of his victim, the faithful follower clambered to his perch, and again the carriage was *en route*. Some splenetic wayfarer has remarked that a broken-kneed white horse formed the arms of "England's favoured county" (to quote the fascinating style of George Robins); now I can, from long experience, declare that, independent of the "neat post-chaises and careful

drivers," promised and given by the postmasters on the road, finer cattle never ate oats than I have had the happiness of sitting behind "in my young days, when George III. was king."

"Three chestnuts and a bay" soon brought our travellers to Sittingbourne. Here breakfast was ordered, and, whilst preparing, the dressing-case was taken from the imperial, the great man by the nose. Leaving the principal personage in our story to the enjoyment of strong coffee, fragrant tea, fresh eggs, country butter and cream, all doubly agreeable after a late sitting over-night, and a drive of some thirty odd miles in the morning, we will follow our friend Brush into the parlour behind the bar, where the attentive landlady was busily employed in supplying him with a substantial breakfast and lunch in one, an English *déjeûné à la fourchette*, and listening with great attention to the details of the attempt made by "the bloody-minded highwayman;" when, to the utter astonishment of the brave defender of his master's life, he saw the very assailant ride into the yard, leap from a horse covered with foam, and make his way towards the house.

"I vow to Gad," exclaimed the astonished valet, "there is the identical ruffian whom I thought I had wounded!"

As he uttered these words, the door opened and

the just arrived stranger stood before him. Shaking a heavy whip angrily, he began—

“ So, I’ve caught you, have I, you jackanapes? I’ll soon let you see what it is to fire at me, and wound my dear old Dolly, a mare that has carried me for seven years, without trip or stumble, and now to be laid up for the rest of her life with a hole in her neck as big as that slop basin; but I’ll make thee pay for it, and that dearly.”

“ Why, you infernally impudent——Yet, no! I will not condescend to call names, but beg you, my good lady, to ring the bell, and send for a constable. This fellow’s coolness would make Turpin’s ghost blush.”

“ Hold your stupid tongue, do, Mr. Gentleman’s gentleman! go, and tell your master I must see him directly; say that one of the King’s riding officers has a bit of business with him.”

This was said with so positive and authoritative an air, that an unfinished breakfast did not prevent the stranger from being ushered into the presence of the person he sought.

The intruder announced his title and his office.

“ Well, Mr. Tancred,” began the great man, thinking that he repeated the appellation.

But the stranger, unconscious of a *Sigismunda*, corrected him; and though, among my personæ of high station, I now, like Sir Giles, “ name no

parties," I cannot forbear, in the case of a word so old English, so promising of all that is festinant, as *Tankard*; but, alas! if *this* Tankard foamed, it was with "rage and extreme toil," with "spleen of speed."

"No, sir, Tankard the officer," he said; "I suppose you won't deny that you were visited, last night, at Lord G——'s, by an old woman; nor that you received from her a certain packet, brought over the water by her son, the biggest smuggler that ever grinned through the bars of Dover castle or Horsham jail? Well, one of the boat's crew, out of spite to the old beldame, peached; I have received a proper deposition of a counter-band transaction, and, therefore, in the King's name, I seize the carriage and luggage, making lawful caption, agreeable to the Act of Parliament — Tem. W. and Mary, made and provided in such cases aforesaid; and as, sir, I'm only doing what's right and regular, you're the last man, I'm sure, to run rusty."

"I!" repeated the pillar of the state; "but, but — who do you presume — to pretend — to think *I* am?"

"Oh, your honour," quoth Tankard, "your face has been in all the caricature shops too long for any mistake; common as a sign-board. The *cunningest* knows that *I*'m no *goose*, whatever you may think me."

This would have been too much for the most phlegmatic *Hollander*; the ministerial smuggler taught his brows Sir Hildebrand's "portentous trick," recorded in "the Heroine."

"Heaven bless you, sir," almost laughed the Seizer, "I'm not to be put off by your frowns; you was born so; but, for all that, every body knows you are one of the best tempered, kindest hearted gentlemen in all England; and so you see I must —"

Our hero had heard him thus far, simply because he could not speak; it was ever remarked that excitement, so thickened, hurried and confused his old-court English, that, though his speeches *read* admirably when printed, they were often so slubbar'dly delivered as to defy all but the most zealous reporters to find or make them intelligible. Maugre the justice of Tankard's late praise, the thwarted senator was now stammeringly wroth.

"But, fellow," he cried, "I—I am not *he*—and if — if I were, is it likely that he — or I — should, after listening to the *scythes* of our own manufacturers, after patronizing the *rice* and *prog-ress* of native ingenuity, after suggesting to some of the first personages of St. *Jeemes's*, that they would personally *oblige* me by bestowing their *gould* on the labouring classes of Great Britain, — I mean, that is, he—the honourable gentleman you have in

your eye — would do^t this, in my position ; is it, then, I ask — probable that we — ”

“ No, no,” exclaimed the landlady, who had been led by sympathy or curiosity to the scene, “ a clear botherment of what they calls the high-dentrification ; that gentleman may, unluckily for he, be like the one you’re arter ; but, as he was a going to ask, is it possible that an honest squire, who can’t say three words without stumbling, should be one of our grandest law-givers ? Lud help you ! why, with his tongue floundering like that, d’yc think they’d ever let *him* open his mouth in the House ? ”

This left-handed compliment jarred every fibre of its subject’s self-respect ; he felt sure, too, that it had not even the redeeming trait of sincerity ; the *dashed* good-natured friend “ knew him all the while ; ” and, what was worse, the would-be saving depreciation imposed not on the dismounted Tankard.

“ My good man,” continued the secretary, “ this seizure you talk of is quite out of the question. I must proceed on my journey without further delay, having business of the first importance to transact.”

“ I don’t mean to stop you, sir ; only the carriage and contents.”

“ I tell you that official papers, of vital im-

port to the state, are with my luggage, and I shall not suffer it to be unpacked till I arrive in town."

"Then, sir, I must go with you, and see the unpacking; and perhaps your honour, as I am disposed to do the civil thing by you, you'll not object to give me a lift, for I've had a smartish bout of the saddle this morning, to say nothing of the tumble I got on the downs, and the next door to dead loss of my Doll; but that part of the story I shall settle with the chap that caused it; and, as I couldn't feel comfortable alongside of him, may be you'll let me have the honour to sit with you."

A withering frown was the only reply to this request. The horses were put to, and, as the Minister drove out of the yard, he found that his new acquaintance, the Riding Officer, trotted by his side, nor did he lose sight of this unwelcome escort for any portion of the time occupied in reaching Rochester.

Alighting there, our Right Honourable contrabandist sent for his persecutor.

"Tankard," he began, "you have proved yourself a vigilant servant; I shall not fail to report your zeal to the Treasury Board; but you need take no farther trouble in this matter. I will be responsible for any thing you may think irregular. Here are ten guineas, to pay your horse doctor; so now make the best of your way home."

“ Must do my offite, sir; if you don’t chuse to let me have quiet possession of my lawful seizure, I shall wait ’till I can take it, without stopping you on the road.”

“ You will gain nothing by this obstinacy—and may make me your enemy.”

“ Impossible, your honour ! you are the King’s servant, as well as myself ; and, so long as I look after my master’s rights, and sees his duty paid, why I’m only doing mine, and you can’t be *my* enemy without being his, and an enemy to fair play, which every body knows you ain’t. So, tired as I am, I’ve only to press another horse, and jog on to London along with you.”

“ Well, since you won’t listen to me, perhaps you may to my man ; and so, instead of pressing horses, and creating a fuss, get over your prejudice, take a seat by his side, and talk over the matter with him.”

To this arrangement, even the owner of the wounded Dolly acceded ; and ~~we~~ shall pass over the remainder of the journey, briefly saying that, by seven o’clock P. M., Downing Street rejoiced in the presence of a Secretary of State, who, thinking it best to leave matters entirely to his trusty man, entered his official residence, not a little anxious as to how the pertinacious Tankard would be disposed of. After waiting nearly half an hour, with-

out sight of his servant, he became somewhat fidgety, and rang to inquire for him, but no one knew of his whereabouts. Soon afterwards the missing valet appeared.

“Where have you been, sirrah?”

“To the coach-house, sir, with Mr. Tankard.”

“And you have brought away the luggage, particularly the packet I bade you place in the seat?”

“No, sir; I have been holding a candle to —”

“The Devil!” interruptingly exclaimed the master.

“One must, sometimes, sir.—’twas whilst Mr. Tankard put seals upon the trunks, and coach-house doors.”

“You? traitor! what induced you to lend *your* assistance to that officious fellow?”

“The fear of being transported for shooting at a King’s officer, in the execution of his mission, sir. We talked the matter over, on the dicky, and he promised not to prosecute, if I would aid and abet him in making good his lawful caption, according, as he says, to the Act of Parliament. In course, sir, I would not have done so, if he hadn’t told me it couldn’t be of any consequence to you; I had no chance but in making friends with the person that had me in his power.”

“Idiot! you know not what you have done!

You have prevented my attending the Levee, and kissing hands on my appointment. That packet contained the materials for a court suit, of the richest French velvet and embroidery. 'Tis hopeless to expect that I shall be able to provide myself with any thing fit to wear in London. So, go this moment, break open the door, and bring me that parcel."

"Botany Bay for life is a fearful thing, sir. I must decline, for the first time, obeying your orders. Why, sir, Mr. Tankard says, that unlawfully breaking his seal is burglary, felony, and sacrilege without benefit of clergy."

"He is a meddler, and you are a fool—leave me! I must contrive to get those velvets by noon to-morrow, or they cannot be made up by the next morning, which is Levee day. However, 'tis too late to take any steps in the business to-night."

Early next morning a letter was despatched to the Chief Commissioners of Excise, requesting permission to retrieve the important packet from its present durance; the reply, which did not arrive till the afternoon, contained information, "that it would be necessary to memorialize the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury," and stating that the next board would sit in three days from the present date. The cool business-like tone of this letter added fuel to the flame which Mr. Tankard had lit, and the valet fanned.

Although in possession of the facts, we are not at liberty to mention the particulars relating to the arrival, late in the evening, of an official letter, commanding the return of the zealous Tankard to the sea side; and thus, without giving absolute permission for the breaking of the seals, removing his watchful eye from the coach-house door.

“And now,” said the politician, as he regained and unpacked his treasure, “we have *only* to get it made up. Send for *my* tailor.”

This *only*, however, threatened to prove insurmountable. The *artiste* in question was not our hero's tailor *only*, but had, many days previously, received such numerous orders from other august patrons, that both, *nay all*, his hands would be busy till within an hour of the Levee. He could but *recommmend* two workmen, whom he had discharged for intemperance, directing Mr. Brush where they might be found. The valet, exploring the haunts of “Dungs and Flints,” discovered “Isaacos and Bartolomeus,” so lost in gin and tobacco, that it was four in the morning ere they could be set to work in the house of the great man. They found him exclaiming like, though so *unlike* Juliet—

“So tedious is this night
As is the night before some festival,
To an impatient child, who hath new robes,
And may not wear them.”

The indefatigable valet persuaded his master to retire to rest, assuring him that he would narrowly watch the cross-legged couple he had introduced to Downing Street, and that his honour might be sure all should be ready in due time. At early dawn Brush despatched a special messenger to the "Orange Tree in White Hart Yard," for extra aid, and two more ninths arrived. The Horse-Guard's clock struck twelve, and he saw complete the suit, which, in all probability, would one day fall to him by reversion.

It was with a feeling of triumph that the Secretary, next morning, attired himself in purple and fine linen, and proceeded to St. James's.

A gracious reception was accorded him by his Royal Master, who did not hesitate to compliment his newly created minister upon the splendour of his apparel, unconscious of the breach of law committed by the wearer.

We must hasten to conclude, and it is our pleasing duty to record that, before the breaking up of the Levee, our "velvet friend" had procured for the riding-officer promotion, and a consequent increase of salary, and that the welcome intelligence was conveyed to him in a letter from the pen of his late (inside) travelling companion, enclosing a bank-note of sufficient amount to compensate him for his journey to London, the wounded Dolly, and fall included.

The story, however, soon spread ; and it was remarked that Sheridan, when in the presence of the exalted smuggler, would now and then quote, in the most pointed manner, such lines as—

“ What patriot-heart but burns at *Duty's* call ? ”

“ *Custom* enacts, and who denies *her* sway ? ”

These, or such as these, were “ bitter words,” that turned the laugh against our hero ; he had found that old customs may nearly disable one from assuming more graceful costumes and new habits ; that a public man must not only *do* his duty to his country, but also *pay* it. He could not, like de Grammont, talk of his Court suit having been swallowed at Calais by “ *les sables vivants*, ” — but he was obliged to confess that his coat, waistcoat, and ineffables, had very nearly been victimized by an *overset* Tankard.

CHAPTER XII.

GENTEEL COMEDY — AN IRISH WARNING — ASHANTEE — MESOPOTAMIA — “THE WISDOM’S IN THE WIG” — AFRICAN CRITICISM — A FAMOUS LEACH — THE SKULLERY — HEADS OF SUBJECTS — A GREAT SPIRIT GONE — THE ANATOMICAL LANDLADY.

A KIND reception and friendly greetings awaited me on my arrival at Woolwich. Our performance was again honoured by a most numerous audience. “The Dramatist” was the comedy. The very disagreeable character of Willoughby had been assigned to a good-humoured pleasant fellow, named Daniel, who, not satisfied with the applause which had been bestowed on his personation of his countryman, Looney M’Twolter, had solicited the manager to allot him a genteel comedy character, as he “had no notion of confining himself to blackguard Irish parts.” The only vacancy which existed arose from the whole squad, himself excepted, having refused to play Wil-

loughby ; it was offered him, and cheerfully accepted.

It was with considerable difficulty I restrained myself from indulging in a laugh at sight of Daniel, dressed for the part ; not content with having attired himself in a suit of sables, he had covered his chin and jaws with such a quantity of burnt cork, as to resemble the hero of my last chapter.

“ My dear fellow, what is your motive,” I asked, “ for making yourself such an object ? ”

“ ’Tis according to the author, and quite in character,” he replied ; “ isn’t Willoughby called ‘ Belzebub,’ and don’t they talk about ‘ his black infernal visage ? ’ and so, by dad, I have given him one.”

No persuasion could induce him to subdue the tone of his beard, or to put an atom of rouge upon his checks ; no wonder, then, that his outré appearance elicited shouts of laughter.

With great care he suppressed the brogue, but in the scene with Louisa, where he threatens her with rudeness, his native accents broke loose, and he roared out —

“ Have a care, madam, havè a care ! ”
with the intonation of a true son of Erin, setting the audience off in peals of merriment. The lady whispered to him —

“ Say it again, you have made a hit ! ”

He, perfectly unconscious, "did as he was bid," and another shout followed his tones of caution.

From the public prints I learnt the satisfactory intelligence of the safe return of my school friend Bowdich, from his Mission to Ashantee. I hastened to find out his residence in town, and gladly grasped the hand of one who had endured so many recent dangers, displaying a courage and skill scarcely ever surpassed. I spent the evening with him and his wife, and listened "with attent ear" to the many marvels he had to relate.

He had brought with him two natives of the newly visited country, a boy and girl; their appearance nothing superior to the common "Coast o' Guinea nigger," but surpassing the generality of blacks I had seen in intelligence. Amongst numerous specimens which he had collected, of curiosities, both natural and handicraft, I was most pleased with various cushions, ottomans, and other affairs, in which party-coloured leathers were very ingeniously used, in great variety of pattern, with a strength and neatness equal, if not superior, to European workmanship.

Bowdich was anxious to see Woolwich; it was arranged that he should attend our next play, and the day following should be devoted to sight-seeing.

I was on my way from the barracks to the

theatre, to attend the last rehearsal, in company with several of my amateur brethren, in tip-top spirits, and anticipating a brilliant house to witness our exertions, when my mirth received an unexpected check which I would willingly have been spared. Passing the hospital garden, I had observed a figure slowly winding its way through the beautiful parterres, followed by a soldier in undress, who appeared to watch the movements of the invalid most attentively: of a sudden, I heard my name uttered in a faint voice, and, as the speaker approached, recognised, with some difficulty, the features of Captain Walter Smith, who had for years been one of my most intimate friends. How changed, alas! from the gay and gallant looking fellow I had first beheld him; regardless of a flower-bed between the wall and path, he approached the iron-railings, and thrust his withered feverish hand through the bars, saying —

“I am glad to see you, my dear Hill. You have heard, no doubt, how very ill I have been? They tell me that, while I was at the worst, my reason deserted me; one of the wretches even went so far as to say that I was incurably mad! But I laugh at his malice; I am now all but recovered in health and strength, with my mind as clear as ever. You are going to play here to-night?”

"Yes, my dear Smith, I will call on you to-morrow, and tell you how the affair went off."

"Oh, I shall be there."

"Indeed!" said I, "don't you think the exertion will be too much for you?"

"Not at all. We have a private box. I am going with the king of Mesopotamia; his Majesty is my particular friend, and is staying with me on a visit, in my quarters here."

This sudden change 'from' calm to evident raving brought to my recollection that magnificent scene in Beaumont and Fletcher's admirable play of "The Pilgrim," where the student, after undergoing a strict examination, which satisfies the querists of his sanity, suddenly proves the error of their judgment, by exclaiming—

"Does the sea stagger ye?
Do you fear the billows?
Be not shaken,
Nor let the singing of the storm shoot thro' ye;
Let it blow on, blow on! let the clouds wrestle,
And let the vapours of the earth turn mutinous,
The sea in hideous mountains rise and tumble;
Upon a dolphin's back I'll make all tremble—
For I am—NEPTUNE!"

I left my poor friend with a heavy heart, and it required no little exertion for me to attend to the business of the scene; at length the all-absorbing interest of my occupation succeeded in restoring me to cheerfulness.

Barlow had obtained permission, from Mr. Harris, for the use of the Covent Garden dresses, for our farce. I was to be attired in the veritable costume of Liston, in General Bombastes, and Truefit assured me that my head-dress was "the very identical wig which he (the great and glorious Liston) wore in that character." I felt almost inspired, in these borrowed plumes, of the laughter-provoking actor; and, having witnessed the irresistible bit of by-play between the original representative and the leader of the orchestra, previous to the song of "Hope told a flattering tale," I was determined, if possible, to excite a laugh, in the same situation; so, tacking two lines of impromptu doggrel to the text,

"Fusbos, give place, you know you haven't got a singing face,
Here Nature smiling gave the winning grace—"

I said—

"Your croaking voice would drive him to a phrenzy,
I'll sing a song—and so play up Mackenzie!"

The master of our band, thus singled out so unexpectedly, lost all power over his bow, the clarionets squeaked, and the trombone uttered an unearthly sound, whilst the liberty I had taken with the author and the leader was rewarded by a hearty laugh.

True to his appointment, my friend Bowdich found out my quarters at an early hour next

morning. I could have wished that he had been somewhat later in his visit, for our dramatic exertions of the preceding night had been followed by a supper, to which the ladies of the company were invited; we had passed several hours after midnight in talking over our evening's exhibition, and consoling ourselves, by potent libations, for the unwelcome thought that it was to be our last play.

With a slight head-ache, I undertook the office of guide. Bowdich, not wishing to lose sight of his black protégé, who had attended him from town, proposed that he should accompany us; and, for the same reason, he also waited behind his master's chair at mess. I mention this simply to illustrate a rather singular trait in the character of the young African. He had looked on the wonders of the arsenal, its countless ordnance, and palaces filled with warlike stores, without indicating the slightest emotion, but during dinner he appeared in a state of perfect wonderment; looking up and down the tables, regarding the viands, the numerous party, all attired in the same costume, the varied liveries of their attendants, with eyes of astonishment. When we retired to my quarters for coffee, his master asked him, "how he had been pleased with what he had seen?" in his imperfect English he replied—

“Much guns, no like. Much soldiers, frightful. Large feast, wonder! So great eat, so great drink. More glass, much silver — never see. Chiefs all gold on shoulder. Gentlemen all colours close them. Move round, no break nothing. Grand large feast.”

I accompanied Bowdich to town next day, and, on reaching his house, learnt that, during his absence, Mrs. Bowdich had promised he should dine with Dr. Leach at the British Museum. I, of course, begged him not to suffer my visit to be any restraint on him, as I could take another opportunity of enjoying his society; but this he overruled by sending word to his host that he should bring a friend with him; which intimation was speedily answered by a kind assurance that his friend would be a welcome guest.

I was accordingly introduced, and found Dr. Leach one of the most delightful persons I had ever met. Highly gifted and intellectual; devoted to science, as were his hours, he had found time to cultivate the minor graces, his manners were at once polished and cordial. I have seldom enjoyed an evening more entirely to my satisfaction than the one I am now naming. Bowdich, of course, was full of the wonders of his travels, and the Doctor naturally inquiring about the animal productions of the regions his friend had

visited. It was agreed that a collection of reptiles, skins, implements of war and husbandry, which the traveller had brought from the interior, should be presented to the Museum, and the Professor of Natural History was charmed at the prospect of having these curious specimens under his immediate control.

It was growing late, time had fled rapidly, in such interesting and instructive converse, and I purposed leaving ; but, as the rain fell heavily, and my hotel was at a considerable distance from Great Russell Street, Dr. Leach kindly offered me a shake-down ; to this arrangement I cheerfully acceded, and, as Bowdich lived close by, we continued our " sitting " some time after we had " heard the chimes at midnight."

At last our tri-party broke up, and I was shown to my room, where I found a large sofa, amply prepared for my resting place. I presumed that the apartment was ordinarily used as a library, from the curtains that hung over three sides of it, completely occupied by ranges of shelves ; as I did not feel disposed to sleep, I thought to indulge in half an hour's reading preparatory to the wooing of my pillow. I drew aside the nearest drapery, and, instead of rows of books, beheld rows of human skulls, placed with more attention to *order* than even those in the Cata-

combs of Paris or Madeira. At first I was somewhat startled at the grim collection, and lost not a moment in ascertaining if the other portions of the room were similarly occupied; they were — nothing but skulls! Skulls of all forms, all nations, all possible varieties. I speedily remembered having heard that the learned Doctor was an ardent disciple of the (then new) doctrines of Gall and Spurzheim; and, doubtless, this collection had cost considerable pains and expence.

I looked in vain for a catalogue, to ascertain, if possible, to whom these relics had once belonged. I might be gazing on the eyeless sockets of murderers and “dungeon ruffians,” or on what once was the seat of philosophy—charity—genius — all that could elevate man above his fellows; but the chances were, the caputs of *mauvais sujets* being more easy of access than those of good men quietly inurned, that I was surrounded by a goodly company. I determined, therefore, to leave the curtains open, and, by accustoming myself to these objects, before I slept, obviate the chance of an unpleasant dream.

Now, although I might here indulge, were I so disposed, in a relation of a wild and fearful vision, arising from the strange tenantry of my dormitory, I will at once acknowledge that I forego the opportunity, and adhere to the fact —

I slept as soundly as ever I did in my life, nor was my slumber disturbed by the slightest recurrence of those speculations which had occupied my thoughts before I went to rest.

Next morning I related to the Doctor the result of my curiosity; he apologised for not having apprised me of the collection the room contained.

I had the satisfaction of seeing much of this highly talented man about this time, and sent him, as my humble offering to the establishment of which he was so distinguished an ornament, a large slab of Cotham, or landscape stone, quarried on an estate of my grandfather's, near Bristol; a finely polished square of Gibraltar rock, and a bone, found among St. Vincent's rocks, at Clifton, filled with the crystals, known by the name of Bristol stone; this bone, Doctor Leach, in spite of the received opinions of naturalists and geologists, pronounced to be human, and, as it was given long before the fossil skeleton enriched the Museum, it was regarded by him as extremely valuable.

I confess that it is a subject of regret to me to add, that the severe illness of my friend prevented these tokens of my respect for him from being duly placed amongst the many wonders of that magnificent national collection.

At a very early hour, on the 3rd of November, I took my seat in a day-coach to Bath; just as we were about to start, a new's-vender, out of breath, ran up to the coach, and, with a face of importance, cried out—

“Morning paper, sir!” I was the only inside passenger—“Full account of the suicide of Sir Samuel Romilly.”

The wheels began to turn, there was just time enough for me to get a copy of the Times, and hand the man a shilling; the change he considered his perquisite, I suppose, as he did not follow the coach to give it me. I read, with extreme grief, the lamentable end of this great man; who, although he professed political opinions in direct opposition to those I had been taught to espouse, was still respected and admired by all parties.

The exclusive bearer of an official account of this lamentable occurrence, I became a person of consequence wherever the coach stopped for a change of horses, coachee and the outsiders spreading the report, and referring their astounded listeners to “the gentleman inside,” for the truth.

“Lord bless you,” said Jehu, to an incredulous listener, “it *must* be true, for it's in the paper.” And I was accordingly appealed to by numerous persons, as to a fact so corroborative.

Without the least wish to introduce any thing ridiculous, whilst dealing with so afflicting a subject, I cannot resist recording the observations made by the good old woman who kept the Crown Inn at Slough, where we stopped for breakfast. The news had reached her, and her curiosity was awakened, but at that early hour she was not attired in fit costume to leave the sanctity of her bar, and encounter inside passengers; so she ascended to her bed-chamber, and, like Mistress Heidelberg, put on her "fly cap for the running counter," then, with a countenance in which grief and anxiety for particulars were strongly depicted, begged me to favour her by a sight of the paper. Of course, I could do no less than accede to a request so made. She devoured the paragraph, which naturally could not contain minute particulars, confining itself to a relation of the effect, without reference to the cause. This latter my worthy friend of the Crown supplied, saying—

"Ah, sir, I know all about it. You'll forgive me, but I can explain how these dreadful suicides are caused."

She did not wait for permission, but proceeded, "You see, sir, there is a little pinnacle at the very top of the brain, about as long as this," and she held up the little finger of her right hand, marking the length of the first joint, by crossing

it with the fore-finger of the left ; “ it comes to a point, as fine as the top of an extinguisher, and, if any poor soul gets into trouble, or loses a dear friend, as Sir Samuel did, why this little pinnacle loses its balance, and falls over”^o—here she crooked her minute digit, “ and the weight of it upon the brain drives the patient mad. Poor dear man ! his little pinnacle will never be upright again.”

Although this good woman might be in error, she shared her mistake with many a philosopher, who has considered the pineal gland as the seat of reason.

On my arrival at Bath, where I stopt for the night, my dinner-table was besieged by a host of inquirers ; to satisfy the curiosity of the coffee-room visitors, I permitted the landlord to copy out the extract, and post it up ; but in some cases this did not suffice—type was the only conviction that would be received—for many, like the coachman, would not be satisfied with the truth until conviction came by the aid of “ seeing it in the paper.”

CHAPTER XIII.

ANOTHER YEAR—THE LITTLE QUEEN FISHER—SHAKESPEARE MATED—REPRIEVE—A GENTLE HINT—AN APPRONT HANDSOMELY ACKNOWLEDGED—BECOMES AN OBLIGATION—THE OLD MAN AND HIS THREE SONS—A WARWICKSHIRE LAD—HAIL WEDDED LOVE!—NATURE AND ART—THE RISING GENERATION—SLEEPING PARTNERS—LEAVE THE COAST.

THE first of the new year (1819) still found me in my comfortable quarters at Archcliffe fort; and the earliest circumstance that occurred, worth notice, was my having the gratification of witnessing the wonderful talent of Clara Fisher, in the arduous character of Shylock. Her presence had attracted a large audience, who testified their delight by loud plaudits. I sat with the charming Mrs. Winthrop, who expressed a great desire to see the dear child in her own dress, divested of the wig, beard, and gabardine of the Hebrew. Having the privilege of going behind the scenes, I introduced myself to her father, whom I found a very superior and gentlemanly person, and signified the wish of Mrs.

Winthrop ; Clara was given to my care ; the contrast between her late appearance, and the simple white frock and smooth hair, modestly parted over her extraordinarily shaped head, was so great, that my friends could hardly believe the tiny thing they now addressed had, but a few minutes before, electrified them by the personation of the most deadly passions of hatred and revenge.

No sooner was her presence in the box known to the audience than she was greeted with applause. Never shall I forget her saying to me—

“ That compliment is not intended for *me*, for I am sure the dear creatures have given me already more than I deserve ; it is for you, for taking notice of little Clara.”

This she said so archly that I could not refrain from kissing her ; and this was followed by such marked approbation by the spectators, as almost to confirm what the intelligent creature had just remarked.

A septegenarian, named Mate, who had passed more than half a century on the stage, and had now retired to the more quiet occupation of a bookseller, in his native town, had requested Mr. Foote to aid his annual benefit by the display of his talents ; and my friend had consented, on condition that I would join him on the occasion.

The old man's 'eloquence was irresistible, on his visit to my rooms to ask the question ; he entertained me with numerous anecdotes of the by-gone worthies of the sock and buskin ; knew the history, both dramatic and scandalous, of all the ladies who had made a sensation during the last fifty years ; narrated the various struggles of his early days, of his applications for engagements to David Garrick and the English Aristophanes ; assured me that he had played every part in Hamlet except Ophelia ; and, in short, succeeded in gaining my consent.

On the evening of the performance he gave strong evidence of his capability of sustaining female characters, by a humorous and admirable personation of the old Beldame, in whose house the redoubtable Michael Perez is deserted by his charming bride, Estifania.

The following morning I received intelligence, as unexpected as it was unwelcome, that, in consequence of some reductions in the regiment, my present company would be drafted into various vacancies, and that my destination was the West Indies.

I own I was somewhat annoyed at this unlooked-for change of residence ; I had no dread of the effects of climate, but I had seen enough of Barbadoes, and other such places, in 1814, to

convince me that the routine of colonial life was any thing but pleasant ; not to mention the distance from England, and the consequent breaking up of all circles of either family or friends. I lost no time in writing to Barlow, to ascertain where my lot was cast, on what island my happiness was to be shipwrecked, whereabouts I was to imbibe sangaree and yellow-fever, catch land crabs, or become food for them. In the course of a few posts, the gratifying information reached me that the company to which I had been attached was then on its voyage *home*, after Heaven knows how many years' service in the torrid zone. This was acceptable news indeed.

In the most enviable state of exhilarant spirits I repaired that evening to a party given by Mr. Russell, who inhabited an old building, called, by the good people of Dover, the " Maizeong-dew," which had once been a Hospital of the Templars, and in those barbarous ages known as the " Maison Dieu."

Here I met vast numbers of my acquaintance, and received many hearty congratulations on my good fortune. During the evening, my friend John L——, of bathing-machine notoriety, asked me,

" Do I meet you on Thursday?"

" Where?"

“ At Gunman’s — it is to be a most splendid affair.”

“ Mr. Gunman is the only person in Dover I have not the honour of knowing ; considering his *name*, and my profession, that is rather strange, but I must contrive to be there, notwithstanding.”

“ How will you manage that ? ”

“ *Nous verrons*,” said I, “ only point him out, if he’s here, and leave the rest to me.”

John — looked about, and, at last, directed my attention to a little withered old man, in breeches and stockings, exhibiting a pair of singularly shaped legs, his head, and the scanty remains of hair left on it, profusely covered with powder, his visage puckered up, like an antiquated Chimpanzee.

I entered into conversation with a young lady, who was standing up in *contre danse*, in his immediate neighbourhood ; as the couples went down the middle or crossed hands, I forget which, I stepped back, to give room to the dancers, and, in so doing, trod upon Mr. Gunman’s foot ; but I had managed to perform that ceremony so gently, that, had he been a martyr to corns, he could not have suffered inconvenience ; however, my object was to be apologetic ; I vowed that I was overwhelmed with consternation and regret at my extreme awkwardness, offered my arm to lead

him to a seat ; in vain he attempted to assure me he had not been in the slightest degree hurt ; I interrupted him by a million of pardons, and, when I thought I had gained his good graces, was about to withdraw, with the most-humble-servant-like bow possible.

L ——— had been watching this scene, and, approaching the old gentleman, asked what had happened.

“ Nothing at all,” replied Mr. Gunman ; “ I fear I have caused considerable uneasiness to a gentleman, who, in the crowd, stepped on my foot. You know all the military men in the garrison, Mr. L ——— ; and, as I have not that pleasure, I must beg of you to introduce me to one who really appears to possess so much feeling and good breeding.”

Jack L ——— laughed at the extraordinary proof I had just given of the qualities named by the unsuspecting old beau, and performed the ceremony of introduction, with a broad grin on his face, at the success of my scheme ; after common-place observations, Mr. Gunman said —

“ I have a few friends coming to me on Thursday, and hope you will do me the favour to dispense with the formality of a call, and join the party.”

I bowed in token of acquiescence, made another

affectionate inquiry for the state of his foot, and left the old gentleman to join some of the party more congenial to my taste.

My ruse was rewarded, the *soirée* was a splendid affair; the 'host, although possessed of immense wealth, did not enjoy a reputation for liberality or hospitality; but it seemed as though, on this occasion, he was determined to prove that such a character was undeserved. All that money could purchase, applicable to such an entertainment, was provided for this gay assemblage. I will not dilate on the endless variety of wines — the ices — Perigord pies — pineapples — grapes and other "sweetmeats," but mention two curious objects that especially attracted my attention, amidst the profusion of pictures, marbles, bronzes, and cabinets which decorated the mansion.

The first was a painting, representing a British Royal Yacht, of ancient build, lying off the long wall of a fortified town on a flat coast; the back ground exhibiting an extraordinary phenomenon of the sun, surrounded by a brilliant prismatic halo, whilst, above and below, in a direct line, and at equi-distance with the real orb of day, were visible two false suns, with similar haloes, touching the central one, but their colouring was brilliant only to the semicircle nearest the seat of

light, the remaining portions being faint and indistinct. Much pains had been bestowed by the artist in perpetuating this remarkable appearance.

I asked an explanation from the proprietor of this singular picture, and learnt that it was painted in commemoration of an illusion witnessed by an ancestor of his in the reign of Charles the Second; and that, if he mistook not, I should find a description at full in Dryden's opera of "Albion and Albanus."

I have taken an opportunity of referring to the work mentioned, and, instead of any poetical allusion to these three suns, find the following quaint stage direction—

"Iris appears on a very large Machine. This was really seen the 18th of March, 1684, by Capt. Christopher Gunman, on board his R. H. Yacht, then in Calais Pierre: He drew it as it then appear'd, and gave a Draught of it to us. We have only added the Cloud where the Person of Iris sits."

The other object was a beautiful specimen of Saxon architecture, placed in the wall, above the first landing-place of the spacious flight of stairs leading from the hall to the first-floor. It was most elaborately carved, and formed a small square, with a projecting slab at the base; the upper corners were adorned with grotesque heads,

and it was altogether so singular a sample of rude workmanship, that, as Mr. Gunman had been so kindly communicative whilst describing the painting, I could not resist asking the history of this strange vestige of antiquity.

"I have," he said, "considerable property in the city of Coventry; some recent improvements rendered it necessary to pull down a few of the most ancient houses in the town, and, as tradition, for many centuries, had given one of these habitations as the absolute abode of the too curious Thomas, and, as the identical window from which he took his indelicate bird's-eye view was also a matter of oral history, time out of mind, I caused the stone framework of the casement to be removed to Dover, and you there see the window-frame of the notorious Peeping Tom!"

This was indeed a treasure! I could not help, whilst remembering the daring disobedience of the man who had rendered this loophole immortal, but look with an eye of pity on its present possessor, well assured, in the language of the Dramatist, that "the sight would have been lost upon" Gunman!

It is not my intention to name the absolute *locale* of the fine old-fashioned mansion into which I am about to introduce my reader, but simply

to state, it was one of those within a convenient dining distance ; nor am I about to dilate on the excellence of the cheer so profusely offered within its walls ; my object is to describe what I beheld during a visit, conceiving that so unique and curious a specimen of the fine arts, as that of which I am about to speak, is deserving of mention.

It will be necessary, however, in describing this family picture, to say somewhat of the family history ; I shall therefore, without further preface, proceed to state, that Sir Geoffrey Wedderburn married, early in life, to the beautiful daughter of a neighbouring baronet ; four children blessed their union, and Sir Geoffrey, taking advantage of the visit of a portrait painter to the county town, determined on possessing the likenesses of his lady, himself, and their offspring, in one interesting group.

The painter attended at Matchwood Hall. A fortnight's close attention to the easel sufficed to complete his task. With a complacent smile of satisfaction he looked upon his labours. Sir Geoffrey, portrayed in all the glories of brocade and lace, a wig and bag adorning his youthful head, stood on one side ; his lady, in a hoop, the drapery of whose damask was ornamented with tufts of ostrich feathers, a *tête* of imposing

altitude, was to be seen on the other; whilst the four little Masters and Misses, in Arcadian costume, occupied the centre, playing with pet animals, whose likenesses were as rigidly adhered to as those of the Wedderburn family.

Hardly had the paint dried upon the canvass, and before the fiery carmines and vermilions had mellowed into something like human complexions, when Lady Wedderburn was gathered to her fathers.

The worthy Baronet was anxious to obtain a female guardian for his bereaved children; and, at the expiration of his year's mourning, married again. His second wife soon produced more arrows to his quiver, a fresh supply of olive branches to adorn his table; and in the space of eleven years from the time she was led all blushes to the altar, seven sweet children were added to the family.

The artist, who had given token of his talent on a former occasion, revisited the neighbourhood with an established reputation; and the second Lady Wedderburn thought *her* children and self had just as much right to be painted as the four eldest, whom she regarded with the affection of a —mother-in-law. Yet how to manage the affair? She could not affront her Lord, by proposing to efface the resemblances of his first family, but that

her own charming cherubs should have their portraits taken she was determined.

Sir Geoffrey, whose constant aim was to keep peace at home, suggested a plan which would obviate all difficulty. The seven scions of his house, brought him by his present adored partner, could be represented in the foreground, which was now only a large patch of grass-plot, commodious enough to exercise a troop of dragoons upon, at least so he said out of the painter's hearing, in his anxiety to meet the wish of his much loved spouse. The four eldest would form a sort of living back-ground, and the features of the late lady should be translated to the clouds, where, with the addition of a pair of wings, and flowing white drapery, she would appear as the guardian spirit of the *two* families, whilst his beloved partner could be drawn on the spot originally occupied by the departed angel.

This arrangement, which satisfied the two seniors, caused numerous dissensions amongst the young folks. The four eldest did not relish the notion of having their becoming and fanciful dresses almost hidden by the frocks and flowing sashes of their half-sisters, or the red jackets, garnished with innumerable buttons, of their half-brothers, added to which, Ponto, their playmate and favourite, whose bones had long mouldered

in the earth, and the pet fox, which Harry was represented to be holding by a chain and collar, must be brushed out to make room for these cubs. However, the parents were positive; the angel in violet-coloured clouds smiled on the "youth of both sexes," whilst, to say the truth, the firstlings of the flock, including the heir to the title and estate, cut but a sorry figure as the rear-rank in this family review.

It is a singular fact, that scarcely had this interesting picture been replaced in its former situation, when the second Lady Wedderburn was conveyed to the family vault.

Sir Geoffrey, who bore his loss with becoming resignation, after some time devoted to decent grief, bethought him that if four babes required female care, the motive which had induced him to form a second alliance, surely eleven young ones claimed such consideration in nearly a triple degree. He married again; and for some years the number of his family remained *in statu quo*. But the peace of Amiens enabling him to travel on the Continent, a visit was accomplished, in company with his young wife, to the spas of Germany; and in less than six months after their return home, caudle, cake, and Constantia were handed round to the numerous friends who came to see the beauteous baby.

Not to dwell upon my story, five times did the neighbours pay similar visits to Matchwood Hall ; and the “ Baronetage ” had now to record the progress of the triple alliance, from THOMAS, the heir, born 25th of December, 1775, in holy orders, down to Theodosia Clementina Sophia, born 1st of April, 1811.

And was it to be supposed that a lady who could confer such names on her daughter would submit to the slightest mark of neglect to any of her offspring ? No, Sir Geoffrey, was now turned of sixty ; and although hale and hearty, not very likely to marry again, should fate ordain that she should be called away from her maternal cares ; the family picture might now be completed ; she did not contemplate another visit to Baden ; and therefore thought it unlikely that she should add another to the sixteen which constituted the Wedderburn circle. Ergo, the family picture *should* be finished.

The original artist had given up provincial engagements ; he was now employed on full lengths of kings, princes, statesmen, and beauties, and doubtless would have blushed to look upon the crude and early efforts of his pencil, pointed out as a fine specimen of the arts to all visitors to Matchwood.

A limner from London was however brought

down, and the "latest arrivals" were done to the life, in all the fascination of the costume for children then displayed in that popular magazine of fashion, "Ackermann's Repository." The new artist's ingenuity was somewhat taxed, as he scarcely found ample room and verge enough for his labours; but at length contrived to place the five darlings in such positions as to give me the idea that he had taken his notion from that manœuvre in platoon firing, "Front rank kneeling." The primal angel, *vis-à-vis'd*, in the clouds, with the sainted spirit of her successor, whilst the father and husband kept his corner and costume undisturbed, and the present Lady Wedderburn, in very scanty petticoats, and remarkably short waist, occupying the station which had been honoured by those above, stood staring from the canvass with an earnestness so intense, that you might almost imagine she was looking out for a husband, in the event of the venerable Sir Geoffrey joining his two treasures in the clouds.

The last time I sported my figure on the Dover boards was for the benefit of the widow and daughter of Andrew Cherry, author of "the Soldier's Daughter," "the Travellers," and many other successful pieces. He was besides an actor of no mean ability, though he failed to make

that impression in London which was anticipated by his admirers in Bath and Bristol, in both which places he was a great favourite.

In February I took leave of my numerous friends at Dover with sincere regret; I had passed nearly three years amongst them, had received the greatest kindness and hospitality, had been invited to the houses of every family of distinction, having completed the list by adding the name of Gunman to the bottom as just now described.

I breakfasted *en route* with Mr. and Mrs. Foote, at Charlton Place, and it cost me considerable pain to part from those who had treated me with so much affection, and had been so mainly instrumental to the enjoyment of my favourite amusement.

I overtook my men before they reached Bridge-hill, and, taking a long lingering look at the many delightful seats skirting Barham downs, bade adieu, for a time, to private theatricals.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN VINO VERITAS—DEATH AND THE DOCTOR—WINE DOES WONDERS—LITERARY COINCIDENCE—HEAD QUARTERS—ET TU BRUTE?—THE RIVAL STATUES—A PEERAGE—BEHIND THE SCENES—THE YOUNG GENTLEMAN—ON MY GUARD—CHARON'S COUNSEL—PHAON PRESERVED.

AFTER dismissing my men, I hastened to call on Mr. and Mrs. Rushbrooke of St. George's, from whom I had received constant and kind attentions, from my first being quartered in the Kent district.

I dined with these dear friends; and my host, on challenging me to a glass of wine, paid my judgment in such matters the compliment of saying—

“I want you to give me your honest opinion of that Madeira.”

I smacked my lips, and, putting on the look of a connoisseur of the first class, gravely replied—

“I should call this Gordon's Sarchal of the vintage of 1812, which had crossed the Atlantic in 1814, remained in the hold of a ship of war

for months on the West India station, had reached England in the spring of 1816, and was bottled in the summer of that year."

"For Gad!" exclaimed Mr. Rushbrooke, "you have positively told the history of its progress from the time it was bought to the hour I had it placed in my bins. Why, you seem to know as much about it as though you had been present at its purchase."

"And so I was. Our mutual friend, Munro, had it put on board the ship in which we were passengers, the dear old Norge!—when we returned from America, our gallant vessel remained on the station, and I well remember the Major's telling me, during a visit to Brussels, that the Surchal, after being so long on its way home, had safely reached its destination; so my supposed judgment resolves itself into a mere knowledge of the facts. But, whilst on the subject, let me tell you what happened to myself connected with this delicious wine."

"Soon after leaving Barbadoes, on our way to Jamaica, I was attacked with a sudden and somewhat violent fever, which increased so rapidly that I was utterly prostrated in strength, and confined to my cot. On anchoring in Port Royal Bay, our surgeon thought it advisable to consult some medical man of the Island, whose

knowledge of the disorder was naturally more extensive than his own ; and Doctor ——, one of the medical staff, I believe afterwards physician to the forces, was requested to give his opinion in my case. Although 'somewhat averse to the trouble of getting into a boat, and clambering up a ship's side, he consented to visit me. I had for some days been in a half-unconscious state of drowsiness, my skin absolutely peeling off my burning body, and only awakened to exertion by a raging thirst ; but perfectly unconscious that I was in a dangerous state.

" I was not aware of the honour intended me ; a rustling of the musquito curtains of my cot first intimated that some one approached me ; I opened my eyes, and saw a huge flat face, with a pair of spectacles on a nose crimson as beet-root ; and this visage advanced itself towards me without speaking a single word. As I gazed on this unexpected apparition, it uttered a loud grunt, and, suddenly dropping the curtain, disappeared.

" I could distinguish voices apparently in conference, and my surgeon's in an almost inaudible whisper. Presently a harsh and grating sound burst upon my ear, and I caught the following broken sentences of consolation :— '

" ' Better have waited till the morning—spared me all the trouble—no use prescribing — not

worth while sending him ashore—pity you didn't know better than to disturb me for no purpose.'

"And a shuffling of footsteps led me to believe that the late visitant had left the cabin. It was near the hour for dinner; I could hear the rattle of knives, forks, and plates, through the canvass walls of my skreen-berth; presently the mess assembled, and my name was mentioned; the surgeon's reply created a momentary stillness, of which I took advantage; and, with all the strength I could muster, sung out—

" ' Doctor !'

" ' What is it, my dear fellow ?' he replied, still keeping his seat at the table.

" ' May I have some wine ?'

" ' Oh yes, as much as you like.'

" ' Umph !' thought I, ' old Furnacc-face has frightened you — but not me.— Send Turner to me, if you please'—I managed to say.

" My faithful valet appeared, looking very gloomy.

" ' Go to the purser, with my compliments, and ask him to send me a bottle of my Madeira, and bring me a Sangarec glass.'

" My orders were obeyed; I bade him pour me out a pint of this Surchal, having bought a quarter cask at the same time this we are now drinking was purchased; again I essayed to speak.

“ ‘ Good health to you all, my dear fellows ; and your’s, Doctor, for allowing me such medicine as this.’

“ With hands scarcely able to hold the tumbler, I lifted it to my mouth, and, devoured as I was with thirst, nearly drank the whole of its contents at a draught.

“ ‘ Who was that queer beast that came to my cot-side just now, Doctor?’

“ ‘ A friend of mine from Port Royal ; never mind any thing about him, but try to get a little sleep.’

“ ‘ Yes, I’ll finish what I have poured out, and then I’ll try. I hope I shall not have the nightmare in the form of that crimson muffin in spectacles.’

“ I completed my draught, fell back on my pillow, was speedily in a profound slumber, from which I awoke soon after day-break next morning, covered with perspiration ; the first dew that had cooled my burning body for many long hours.

“ A short time before breakfast *my* Doctor came to my bed-side, fully anticipating, as he afterwards assured me, that it would be his last visit : he saw the big beads of moisture standing on my forehead, felt my pulse, and, with a cheerful face and manner, announced that all danger

was past. I told him that, but for the *grunt* of his medical friend, I might have gone to Susan."

"And who was she?" asked Mr. Rushbrooke.

"The daughter of that excellent person who nursed the fair and unfortunat^e Juliet Capulet; the mother, you know, assures her mistress that 'Susan is with God.' But, to proceed, I felt determined not to verify the prediction of that hideous old monster, and that the Madeira had enabled me to carry my resolution into effect. That I recovered I need not say, because here I am, enjoying your hospitality, and quaffing this life-preserving liquid."

Mrs. Rushbrooke was certainly one of the most agreeable and fascinating persons that ever breathed. Her reading was extensive and various, and her love of dramatic literature rendered her still more dear to me. She lived a life of comparative seclusion; Mr. Rushbrooke and herself rendering themselves happy, and making others glad in this quiet city, instead of inhabiting the family seat, Rushbrooke Hall, in Suffolk, relinquished in favour of their son. Of Colonel Rushbrooke it was their pride to speak; it was not my good fortune, at the time of which I am now writing, to be known to him, but I have since had the pleasure of meeting him, and can vouch that he well deserved all the enco-

miums which the fondest parents could lavish on him, that he is indeed a worthy descendant from such superior and gifted beings.

Amongst other topics the lady of the house asked me if I had ever read the "Simple Story;" and, on my replying in the negative, she strongly recommended it to my attention, at the same time, with a clearness of description and beautiful command of language, proceeded to detail the plot and incidents. I listened with extreme interest to the narrative, at a particular point of which I hastily interrupted her, exclaiming—

"Forgive me, my dear lady, for this sudden outbreak, but pray let me tell you that you have thrown a light on a subject to which for ages I have been vainly endeavouring to obtain a proper clue. It is many years ago that whilst stopping at a farm-house, on a shooting excursion, I beguiled a long winter evening in perusing all that was left of a volume whose title page and final leaves had been torn away by some Goth; it appeared to be the continuation of a story, after a lapse of many years, but contained sufficient interest, without a knowledge of the fore-gone portion; it must have been the Simple Story; pray proceed, you bring it back to my recollection as though I had perused it yesterday."

My kind hostess did continue, and as, in after

days, I read the narrative in a perfect form, it needed not that the name of one of the characters should be the same as her own, to remind me of all her goodness to me.

It was with deep regret that I parted from these much loved friends, and, the next morning, continued my route; for the following days of the march, I was left to chew the cud of sweet and bitter fancies, without a companion; and it was with considerable satisfaction that I found myself at the end of my weary way, and seated at the mess-table at Woolwich, with many a well-known face and old acquaintance near me.

Few days elapsed before I visited London, witnessing Brutus at one house, and Evadne at the other. With the former, in spite of Kean's fine acting, particularly in the early scenes, I was not pleased; the family of Tarquins were rendered impudent puppies of to-day, by the want of judgment on the part of their representatives; the detested Parricide had thriven on Murder, and, from her unusual magnitude, never failed to create a laugh, when she exclaimed—

“ I was not born to fly !”

The whole affair was showily got up, but not in good taste; and a facetious friend happily said of it, “ Howard Payne's Brutus is a bad pantomime, with only one trick in it.”

Alluding, doubtless, to the destruction of the equestrian statue of Tarquinius Superbus, which somehow or other generally hung fire, and spoiled Kean's finest soliloquy.

The splendid talents of Miss O'Neil, Charles Kemble, and Young, were displayed to great advantage in Mr. Sheil's adaptation of Shirley's "Traytor." Never shall I forget the manner in which Colonna struck Vjcentio with his gauntlet. Chivalry, in its high and palmy state, never witnessed a challenge better given or received.

The Artillery Balls have been so long praised by Belles, and paragraphed in that record of fashion, the Morning Post, that I shall not venture to add a word about them. I shall content myself with saying, that the one which occurred most appropriately, on Lady-Day of this year, afforded me the opportunity of inviting my friend Bowdich, and my old brother soldier, Mr. Fonblanque, to partake of its gaiety. The latter had thrown aside his sword and buckler, and was busily studying for the bar, meaning to follow in the steps of his talented father, whose exertions had on this very day been crowned with success, in removing the attainder which had long been attached to a noble Irish family.

The subject of the father's forensic victory accompanied the son to Woolwich, and was in-

troduced, for the first time in his life, by the title of Lord D——. His lordship bore his blushing honours with a vast deal of ease; but, had they been as thick as his brogue, they might have proved inconvenient.

In April I accompanied my friend Barlow to town, for the purpose of going over Covent-Garden Theatre; his father was the intimate and confidential friend of Mr. Thomas Harris, and, with the liberality for which that gentleman was distinguished, the *entrée* had been given to the Captain and any friends who might accompany him. I was surprised at the magnitude of the stage—the complicated machinery, both above and below it—nor were the painting-rooms and wardrobe objects of less delight.

My Cicerone was well known to most of the leading men of the establishment; so kindly greetings were exchanged with many, whom I had never heard speak before, except the words set down for them. In many instances there existed scarcely any difference between their stage manner and common tone of colloquy. Blanchard had the same peculiarities of voice, the same good-humoured warmth of manner. Fawcett, whilst expressing himself heartily glad to see his young military friend, spoke much in the fashion as I had heard him welcome Lord

Ogleby, a few nights previous ; but an exception to this rule occurred, which I must mention.

I had been listening with much delight to the magnificent declamation of Mr. Young, who was in the act of rehearsing in some tragedy, whose name has escaped me, but it was one in which this great actor had to deliver a speech of bold defiance to some conspirators, whom, after awing into silence, he leaves, with a threat of vengeance.* Whilst the words of the poet were still ringing in my ears, the speaker approached Barlow : the rapid and honeyed accents in which he accosted him were so different from the lofty strains which still echoed round the theatre, that I could hardly reconcile the idea that it was the same person who now spoke.

I was introduced — received with all the grace and urbanity for which Mr. Young is distinguished. Years after it was my good fortune to know much of this true gentleman and estimable man ; but of those days I hope to speak at some future time.

The Royal Arsenal at Woolwich, I need scarcely say, is duly protected. A Captain and Subaltern are to be found daily at the main-guard near the gates. A Subaltern has charge of the wharf, &c.

* It was *not* Pierre Mr. Young was rehearsing.

This latter post, during the summer, was by no means disagreeable, the constant succession of every denomination of craft, making their way up or down the Thames, cannot fail to become objects of interest.

I was strolling round the vicinity of my post, when I perceived two youngsters busily occupied in adjusting the mast and sails of a small pleasure-boat ; from the haste which attended their preparations, I could not but surmise that they had no positive right to the use of the vessel ; I was not long in doubt.

An old man, who was employed as superintendent of the ferry, which communicated with the opposite shore of Essex, came up to the spot where I stood ; his arrival was soon evident to the youngsters, one of whom betrayed unmistakeable signs of shame and alarm, at being thus suddenly detected in his attempt at a clandestine aquatic excursion ; scarcely had the crimson blush mounted to his cheek, when the ferryman, in the kindest tone, thus addressed him —

“ Well, Bill, you’ll have a wery nice sail as far as Erith Reach—tide’s running down fast, and the little wind there is will sarve to carry you there as pleasantly as heart can wish ; you can go ashore — have your bit of bread and cheese com-

fortably with your maté; by the time you've finished your ale, the tide 'ul be upon the turn; you can manage to be back quite time enough to put the boat up before dark, and be home to supper with your mother and I. That's all well, so far, but now for t'other tack — you'll have your day's pleasure, so will I — and if, before breakfast to-morrow morning, there's a bone in your body that don't ache, why, blame me, that's all!"

With these words, the "ancient mariner" walked away, leaving his son in a state of bewilderment and consternation by no means enviable, though of strangely brief duration.

Surely never was there a more powerful instance of the art of ingeniously tormenting, than this old fellow had exhibited; had he called the truant out of the boat, and applied a rope's-end to his back, upon the spot, for his disobedience, it would have been no more than a due exercise of paternal authority; but, to picture out the pleasures of the sail, with almost an approving smile upon his iron visage, and then to threaten the bastinado for the morrow — it was absolutely fiendish.

The boys steered their course; I suffered them to make their way out of recal, and sent for the ferryman, nor did I let him leave me till I had extorted from him a solemn promise that the in-

tended fustigation should be dispensed with ; I had the further satisfaction of announcing this cessation of hostilities to the youngster on his return from his trip.

He looked as if he had enjoyed it, even with a threshing in perspective. There was courage and philosophy in this, which deserved the reward, or rather the absence of punishment, that I had procured for him.

CHAPTER XV.

OVER SHOES OVER BOOTS—SOCK AND BUSKIN—'TIS MEET YE
DO FORGET—CARVE WORK—HOT AND COLD—"G. R." THE
POETIC FORRESTER—GUSTAVUS OF SWEDEN—HANGING WOOD
—MURDER.

I HAD now been nearly two months at Head-Quarters, during which period many a wish had been expressed by others, as well as myself, as to getting up another amateur play; frequent discussions on the subject had arisen, and, at length, permission from the higher powers was obtained.

But, before I mention particulars, I must record, in its due place, a circumstance which afforded me great satisfaction.

I visited town on the 17th of April, intending to see the new play, from Sir Walter Scott's captivating story of the Heart of Mid-Lothian; when it was my good luck to encounter my friend Matthews; he met me with great cordiality, insisted on my 'sharing his family dinner, that is, if I

would put up with the Gothic hour of four;’ I consented most willingly, adding —

“ You shall see what due honours I will pay to *your* ‘ roast beef.’ ”

With military punctuality I reached his lodging in Tavistock Row, as St. Paul’s, Covent Garden, struck the appointed hour. Hessian, jockey, jack, and other sorts of boots, with divers pumps, both single and “ double channelled,” as the sailors have it, filled the lower windows, but a private side door was ornamented with a knocker, to the which I applied, and was forthwith conducted to the drawing-room floor, the cloth was laid, and my host was in the act of decanting a bottle of wine as I entered.

“ Now you *are* a capital fellow,” said Mathews, “ true to your appointment. I like you for that. Mrs. Mathews will be here this instant, must introduce you to her and my boy — my only son.”

Saying which he “ moved me with courteous action to the more removed ground,” on which the sofa stood. As I took my seat, my eyes fell on a marvellously faithful miniature likeness of my host, in the character of the “ old Scotch woman ;” I could not repress my admiration of its fidelity and execution.

“ Yes,” said its original, “ Clint is a clever creature, few more so. One of these days I

mean to collect a few good pictures, portraits of my brethren of the lamp, and, of course, of my sisters too — but I shall wait 'till I have some tiny place to hang them up in — here we are only in ready-furnished lodgings; all very well, considering, but I long for another hut of my own."

Mrs. Mathews now joined us; with a winning manner she bade me welcome, and, in unaffected tones, apologized for their humble fare. Master Charles soon followed his mamma; a tall boy for his age, resembling his mother's half sister, Miss Kelly, much more than either of his parents. Our family party was speedily completed, by the entrance of a young lady, daughter to the master of the house, who took her seat at table as a matter of daily occurrence; she was much and deservedly beloved by my host and his wife, and appeared an especial favourite with the boy.

When the fish was replaced by the *roti*, Mathews, looking at me with a peculiar sort of gaze, in which one eye seemed trying to outdo his fellow in point of penetration, and, with his hand upon the cover which concealed the joint, said—

"Pray, may I ask what you meant this morning about 'roast beef?'"

"Merely that I felt pretty certain I should find that dish at your table, after the declaration you made at Dover of your predilection for it."

“What can you possibly mean? here’s another of those strange mistakes to which *I* am constantly subjected. I say, my dear, does this put you in mind of what you heard?—however, no matter for that — all I mean to say is—I perfectly recollect the remarkably fine leg of mutton I partook of at your table, and I think I have here as pretty a specimen of South Down, so Miss Gann tells me, for, bless her! she takes care of the house; I say, as pretty a specimen of South Down as ever you ate. Roast beef? why, my dear fellow, the thing is quite impossible. I never *did* eat roast beef from my childhood — can’t touch it, never could.”

“Why, Papa,” said Charles with a smile which seemed to imply that he was accustomed to these sweeping statements; “that was roast beef you took for supper, at Mr. Liston’s, the other night.”

“How should *you* know, my dear? d’yc think *I* don’t know what I’m talking about? you’ll try to persuade me, by and by, I don’t know that this is spinach; perhaps you will be so obliging as to assure me it is asparagus; now, my dear Charles, just check that spirit of contradiction that you are so apt to indulge in at my expense.”

All this while he was making strange incisions on the South Down; after two or three vain attempts at carving, he cried out —

“ I give it up ; I never could, nor I never will attempt it. I’d sooner dine off dry bread than try it. Polly, my dear, I beg pardon, but when I’m dead beat I forget my proper attention to etiquette ; do, like a dear soul, cut up this for me.”

Miss Gann obeyed, and appeared quite *au fait* at the office my friend relinquished in despair.

Perceiving that my young acquaintance was somewhat disheartened by the observation lately addressed to him, I entered into conversation on some subject I imagined likely to change the current of his thoughts ; his reply was evidently affected by the rebuke he had met, and caught the attention of his father, who, with a kindly air, said —

“ I’m ‘not angry with you, my Charles, don’t think so — I’m only surprised to find that you should not have known beef when you saw it.”

“ My dear Mathews,” said his wife, “ what our boy said *was* quite true ; it was a cold sirloin of beef that you supped off at Mr. Biston’s.”

“ Oh ! cry you mercy, madam !” said he quickly, “ *cold*, ah, ha ! that’s another affair ; there’s as much difference between cold roast beef and hot roast beef as between — as between a — as in fact — a glass of wine, my dear Hill ; Charley, boy, join us, let’s think and talk of something else.”

Conversation on general subjects commenced, and, by mutual consent, the obnoxious words were studiously omitted; had Christmas fare been mentioned, I am confident that plum-pudding only would have escaped our lips, so anxious were we, the majority, to preserve harmony.

In good time to see the new play commence, I left my kind friends, and expressed a hope to see them at Woolwich, when a ship-launch or review should tempt them so far.

Our amateur rehearsals "progressed." I had resigned the character of Lord Trinket to a friend who was anxious to try his histrionic powers. Although an excellent soldier, he required considerable drilling, but proved himself a docile recruit, and was soon reported to the manager as "fit for duty." Colonel Wylde has of late filled a very important post on the Peninsula, and, doubtless, when in personal conference with the grandees of that ill-fated portion of the globe, has smiled at the recollection of the embroidered suit, bag-wig, and other appendages in which he disguised himself for "that night only."

To him I owe the introduction to Mr. George Raymond, with whom an intimacy has existed up to the present day, and of whom I shall have frequent occasion to speak. He was, when first we met, an admirable specimen of the Ranger

order ; the attainments recently gained at the University mixed up with the rake-helly air of the Templar ; he was considered, by the ladies, a *beau garçon*, and many a fair damsel, at the Blackheath balls ; set her cap at, and her affections on, my agreeable acquaintance.

Daniel, who had created so much merriment on a former occasion, was quite at home in O'Cutter ; I have never seen a more perfect representative of this hero of Tower-hill and the Tender. In the farce he enacted Teague, myself being the Obadiah ; in the innocence of his heart he nearly suffocated me, by pouring down my throat an intolerable quantity of Sherry — he thought, I suppose, as he did about his black suit and visage, that as it was “ Sherry ” in the text, he could not do wrong in supplying the wet Quaker with it, in an unadulterated state.

Colonel Wylde was not the only recruit of the evening. Sir Harry Beagle was sustained most appropriately by a devoted lover of the chase, who drest the part to the life, but was not too conversant with the language of Colman. This, in him, was somewhat unpardonable, seeing that he himself wooed the Muses, with what success I will presently show.

“ Yes,” he said to me, between the acts, “ I staid for a month at Sir ——’s, at Melton.

Capital fellow — glorious stud—paid me every attention ; so, when I was going away, I thought I couldn't do less than make him a present of a copy of my work, a poetical one, upon hunting ; have you ever seen it ?”

“ No, I have not had that pleasure.”

“ I'll send you a copy — I've a great many by me, for, somehow or other, it didn't sell.”

Next morning, true to his word, for he was, with all his Nimrod propensity for destroying hares and foxes, a kindly hearted creature — a pamphlet was left for me at my quarters, with “ The Author's best regards.” I hastened to ascertain the extent of his poetic inspiration, and read as follows—

“ Hunting has become so general an amusement,
That to all men of fashion it is quite an inducement.”

How amply such a proof of literary gratitude must have repaid Sir —— !

But, whilst on the subject of presents, I must not omit to mention that our riding department and our excellent band were under the control of Colonel Quest. This gentleman was the natural son of the unfortunate Gustavus of Sweden, who fell by the hand of Ankerstroom.

The Colonel had, early in life, received a commission in the British service, and had proved

himself a ripe soldier. He was a man of the most prepossessing exterior, a handsome face, and remarkably erect figure, which was seen to great advantage in the white undress uniform worn by the officers of the riding-house department; his hair, although white as silver, was always in powder, whilst a thin queue nearly reached to the sash which encompassed his taper waist.

Colonel Quest was one of the staunchest supporters of our amateur amusements, and did me the favour to express himself pleased with my exertions, begging me, at the same time, to accept a snuff-box in token of regard.

Little did I imagine, when I first became possessed of this *gage d'amitié*, I should see the donor's father represented by my old brother soldier, Warde; and that the pacific Mr. Phillips would for so many nights enact a singing assassin.

I had walked over to Greenwich one morning, about this time, and, being somewhat lazily disposed, took advantage of the Woolwich coach passing through to save my legs. I found the vehicle occupied by my Hythe friend, Colonel Newhouse, of the Invalid Artillery; Colonel Gravatt, a resident in the Arsenal; and a man, whose years must have exceeded the usual limit

of threescore and ten ; he was attired in black, his legs encased in silk stockings, with gold buckles at his knees — a somewhat singular costume for the time of day, or the age of the wearer.

A civil recognition passed between old Newhouse and myself, and he continued the conversation with his friend, which my entrance had interrupted ; the topic appeared to be the extraordinary alterations which had taken place since last Newhouse had travelled this once familiar road.

“ Why, Gravatt,” he remarked, “ there’s scarcely a vestige left of Hanging Wood, and surely we are on the spot where once it stood, rendering this a rather dangerous route, after night-fall. Do you remember,” he continued, “ the fearful adventure that befel us, one night, as we were coming home, after dining at Greenwich, when we were Cadets ?”

“ To be sure I do,” answered Colonel Gravatt.

“ May I ask what it was ?” said I.

“ Certainly,” replied Newhouse ; “ Gravatt and myself were somewhat behind our time, and were running, with our best speed, to reach the Academy before the doors were locked. We were hastening through a portion of the road completely overshadowed with trees — I think

within fifty yards of where we are at this moment, when I fell over some substance which lay across the path; Gravatt came to my aid, and we discovered, to our utter consternation, that I had stumbled upon the body of a man, who was lying with his throat cut, and weltering in his blood. I need not say we were both much shocked at such a ghastly sight. Life was too certainly extinct; but, in spite of our being somewhat behind our time, we thought it right to give the alarm, and, on reaching the Ship Tavern, opposite the Dock-yard gates, informed the waiter of this appalling circumstance."

The old man in black, who had evidently listened to the relation with more than common attention; said—

"I remember it well, gentlemen; I was the person to whom you communicated the intelligence. Bless me! why you were both boys then, and I in my prime; how strange that we should meet again after such a lapse of years! Yes—Master, and the ostler, and myself, took a lantern and went to the spot you had mentioned; and there, sure enough, we found a poor seafaring man, cruelly murdered—stone dead, with his pockets turned inside out. We had taken a couple of the Marines from the Dock-yard, with us, to the bloody spot; and, between us,

we carried the body to the Tap, where the coroner sat upon it. In my hurry and alarm I had forgotten to ask your names, and so you escaped being examined on the inquest; and nobody could fancy for a moment that two boys—young gentlemen, I should say, had any hand in the barbarous affair. I did hear, some time after, that one of the transports sent to Botany Bay confessed on his death-bed that he had robbed and killed a sailor between Greenwich and Woolwich. God bless me! how time flies! It seems but yesterday, and I have left the Ship these five-and-twenty years, and what you speak of, sir, happened long before that.’

In acknowledging his station in life, he fully accounted for the silk stockings which habit had taught him to consider as constituting a proper portion of his costume.

CHAPTER XVI.

MATURING GENIUS — A PLAIN ANSWER — BUY A RIPE MELON
— A MAN TO BE LIKED PER SE — A BENCH NOT THE KING'S —
A NATURAL MODEL — TRY THE WATERS! — IRISH VERACITY.

THE production of a new tragedy, by Maturin, took me to town. I had known his father and brother, the latter intimately, during my sojourn in Ireland, and had passed a few hours in the author's society, while he paid a short visit to his relatives.

The cast of the drama included the names of Young, Charles Kemble, Macready, and Miss O'Neil. Yates was also to sustain a character of peculiar construction, and I had long wished for an opportunity of witnessing his tragic powers.

Covent Garden was crowded to the ceiling on the night in question; in those days people cared something about the drama. Nothing could exceed the applause which the three first acts of

“Fredolfo” (for so the tragedy was called) elicited; great was the meed of approbation bestowed on the fine acting of those above named, but still greater was the surprize of many present to find that the new candidate for fame, Yates, absolutely bore away the palm; the part he played was one by no means calculated to conciliate his audience, but he threw so much of genius and dramatic talent of the highest order into the character, as to render it the most prominent of the piece.

In the fourth act some few signs of dissatisfaction were manifested, and the revolting catastrophe, in which the stage was strewn with dead bodies, the lovely heroine included, who was killed even whilst clinging to the crucifix for protection, raised such a tumult of disapprobation, that the piece was never enacted again. I cannot help thinking that, had it been successful, the stage would have gained a tragedian, and lost a mimic.

My play-going propensities drew me frequently from Woolwich, and many a good fellow became my substitute for duty there; but on one occasion was I treated with more candour than courtesy. My man always delivered a message literally, whatever might be its style.

“Well, Turner,” I said, “did you ask Mr.—,”

the next officer, if he would take my picket for me to-morrow?"

"Of course I did."

"And what did he say?"

"Whoy, he said, he'd be *dom'd* if he would."

At an exhibition of the works of Harlowe, I encountered my friend Mathews. No sooner had we shaken hands, than he began —

"Ah, this is lucky, I know you are fond of pictures, or you wouldn't be here; and that you can tell a good one when you see it, I am sure, by what you said about my Clint t'other day.— I've begun—I mean to have one—"

"Have what, my dear sir?"

"Why, a gallery of my own;—a picture gallery. Step this way—isn't that a delicious likeness of dear Charles Young? isn't he speaking? don't you hear him?"

And an admirable imitation followed, to which I could not but reply —

"To be sure I do, as plainly as ever I did in my life."

"Must have my blessed Young; now look at these," and he pointed to two exquisite pencil drawings, one of Miss Mellon, and the other Elliston; "there's a Robert William for you, look at his roguish eye, and his animated sparkling face; and there's dear good-natured Harriet. Lord! what

a wicked-looking, rest-breaking devil it is! Now, don't you think that these three pictures are gems?"

I assented, and off he went to the conservator of the gallery, and wrote a cheque for £80, the price fixed by the executors of the deceased artist.

It was easy to be seen that my friend was bitten with the mania for picture buying, a hobby-horse which cannot be ridden without the same material always necessary to increase the speed of the mare, at least so says the proverb. A previous engagement prevented my accepting his pressing invitation to accompany him home, and look at his new purchases; but, ere we parted, I promised to see him soon.

Two very amiable and interesting young Persians had, for many months, resided at Woolwich, where they studied various matters connected with fortification, gunnery, &c., and they were deservedly great favourites with the men of my corps.

Never were two persons more widely contrasted in appearance than these subjects of the Shah. Mirza Jaffier or Giaffer was tall, dark, with almost Norman features; of a grave and reserved manner. His countryman, Mirza Rieza, was a squat, fat, punchy little fellow, with a

face as round and as shining as a well-polished apple ; the soul of fun, and, though unblest with beauty, as vain as a peacock, a prodigious dandy, and a mighty smoker.

It was because I had promised to accompany him to the play, that I had declined Mathews's invitation. Accordingly, at half-past six, I called on my Asiatic friend. I found him attired in a new vest of silk, richly embroidered, a shawl of considerable value twisted around his goodly corporation, the pipe in full operation, and the tea equipage before him. To the sober beverage I perceived that he added the juice of lemons, and I was induced to try the effect ; it made a sort of harmless punch, and was admirably suited to allay thirst.

We reached the theatre in good time, but found great difficulty in procuring places ; Rieza had no notion of sitting on a back row, where he might remain unnoticed. I was endeavouring to gain the good offices of the box-keeper by the surest road to the hearts of most men, when my somewhat impatient Persian said—

“ Why cannot 'Mirza Reiza sit in the king's pew ? he always have the king's pew with Sir Gore ; he will not go to bad chair to look at play ; he want to see ladies too.”

I certainly had never heard the mistake before,

and wondered how he could have confused the seats of a church with those of a theatre, as I much doubt his ever having entered the former.

Fairfield's always calling "Waiter!" when he wanted a box-keeper was far more explicable.

My bribe had a due effect, a front row was obtained, and, as it happened, we were seated near a box filled with some remarkably handsome women; his Mirzaship was in the best possible humour with himself and all around him. The circumstance of his keeping his black sheep-skin conical cap on during the whole evening attracted the attention of many in the pit, but the galleries fortunately did not observe it, or the cry of "Hats off!" might have disconcerted my companion. His remarks on the play were but few; Friar Lawrence appeared to him a person of equal consequence with Romeo, Mercutio, or even the fair Juliet herself; in fact, more so; for he seemed to pay earnest attention to the speeches delivered by the charitable and kind-hearted old botanist, in the midst of one of whose soliloquies Rieza turned round, and said with a reverential air—

"Holy Father has got a good deal to say!"

Besides the two Mirzas just named, there belonged to their party a gentleman named Hadjee Baba; (not the hero of Morier's delight-

ful romance) *he* had come to this country to study medicine, and adopted European costume, as more convenient than his own for "walking the hospitals," to say nothing of the streets.

One night, at the Rev. Dr. Holcombe's, a good laugh at the expense of the Hadjee arose from the butler mistaking his style and title. The man, with great gravity, threw open the door, and announced the dusky Doctor as "Major Dadda!"

Towards the latter end of August I obtained a few days' leave; and, happy at escaping even for a short period the dull routine of guard mounting, &c., &c., I accepted an invitation to visit friends with whom I had been on terms of great intimacy, whilst quartered in Limerick, seven years past. They resided at Cheltenham, and it was arranged that I was to 'accompany the son of my hostess' on this excursion, he being also stationed at Woolwich with his corps, the Royal Engineers.

The road from London had all the charm of novelty to me; we travelled outside, the weather being deliciously fine. Never shall I forget my first sight of Oxford; it exceeded in architectural beauty my most sanguine expectations, and although my acquaintance with it on this occasion was necessarily confined to the hasty glimpse

obtained in passing through, it left a deep impression on my recollection, and created an ardent desire to become more perfectly acquainted with the wonders of this seat of learning.

I am not aware if it has ever been stated that there is to be seen between Oxford and Cheltenham a wide extent of undulating ground, on which roads, farms, woods, and other features, are so disposed as to render this spot an absolute fac-simile, if I may be allowed the expression, of the Field of Waterloo, as it was at the time of that ever-glorious battle; not as it is now seen, profaned and spoilt by Dutch taste and Belgian vanity.

Soon after six o'clock in the evening, we drove into the delightful town of Cheltenham; few persons were to be seen at this hour; but the gaiety of the shops, the wide pavement, the well-swept streets, presented an air of comfort truly English. Alighting at the Plough, we soon reached the cottage ornée of my companion's mother. I was received with the kindest welcome; and, as soon as we had toiletized, joined the family party at dinner. After a separation of so many years, we had much to say about past times; I would gladly have devoted the whole evening to retrospections, but that a concert was to take place, and I was expected to accompany the party to the assembly rooms.

Here I encountered many well-known Irish faces, and not a few Irish friends. Mrs. S—— invited two or three of those best known to me to join us at that most social and chatty meal — supper.

One of our party was a dignitary of the Church, another a general officer ; we were all in a merry mood, but it is no less strange than true, that for fun, anecdote, and hilarity, the Reverend Archdeacon carried all before him, defeating the General in his attempts to take the field, and skirmishing at the same time with the vivacious widow, and her fair daughters. It was not till a late hour that our agreeable coterie broke up, and, in consequence, it was with great regret I left my pillow at the unusual hour of seven, being told that it was the custom to visit the Spa at eight. Gallantry and good breeding demanded that I should attend the ladies on this occasion, though I secretly vowed that I would beg off any more such breakings in upon my natural rest during my stay.

By eight of the clock we reached the Montpelier Spa ; the walks were thronged with well dressed people. I could not tolerate the idea of seeing ladies in such handsome costume at such an hour in the morning, particularly as I knew that they had bestowed all this pains on their

toilets to enable them to take physic publicly, which they could have swallowed more comfortably at home. There was no attempt to conceal the object of their congregating, for many of the belles carried glasses, handsomely cut, and accommodated with a handle, through which a taper finger was thrust, thus enabling them to flirt these half pint measures about, whilst in conversation with their beaux, with as much nonchalance as though they were using their fans. This appeared to me rather an indelicate practice ; but, doubtless, all the little airs and graces which attended the taking the waters were looked on as necessary by the parties concerned.

We returned to breakfast, and, about three o'clock, a promenade in the High Street was proposed ; it appeared as though the population was divided into two classes—importations from Hibernia and from Hindostan ; every other face bore evident marks of long years past in the yellow East ; such shoals of bilious nabobs, and gouty governors ! such clouds of tobacco smoke from the cheroots that were to be seen burning in the mouths of mummies on green benches — the High Street being amply supplied with these out-of-door accommodations. Then such Ulster, Munster, Connaught, and Leinster dialects met your ear, that to me it was quite refreshing now

and then to catch the sound of a native voice, and listen to accents in real double Glo'ster.

In the course of our ramble we encountered a handsome and well-dressed man, who was asked by my hostess why he had not of late called at her cottage.

"Oh, pledge you my word, my dear Mrs. S——," he replied, "nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to go to see you, but I've been mightily engaged on some family matters. You know my cousin, Lord Kilclanbally? ah, the poor fellow! he got into some difficulties, and sent for me to consult; well, to London I went, talked over matters, walked down to the Golden Cross, Charing Cross, took a ticket in the mail, crossed by the Head, sent for his agent the moment I reached Morrison's; sold two or three streets in Dublin — some of the best in the city — returned with the cash, and paid the rascally tailors, boot-makers, saddlers, and other fellows of that sort, that were worrying the life out of him. That's the reason I haven't been near you; but I give you my honour I'll see you soon."

And off he walked. I could not but be pleased with the zeal the gentleman had evinced in the cause of his cousin, Lord Kilclanbally; but my admiration received a severe check, when, upon

inquiry, I learnt that his lordship, far from possessing so large a property in the capital of his country, as to enable his friend to sell “two or three streets” with such apparent ease, never had been the owner of a *cabin* in that metropolis, he had, it is true, succeeded to a small estate in Galway, which property he lost at hazard, before he had completed the first of his years of discretion.

CHAPTER XVII.

AN ORDERLY WHITE SERJEANT—M.C.—THE WIFE—A FUNERAL—NO CHIEF MOURNER—DRIVING OVER MY OWN NAME-SAKE—AN INTRODUCTION—A FLARE UP—THE FALSTAFF—A “GREAT ONE OF ‘THE CITY’”—THE HERO OF BUENOS AYRES—SETTING THE TIBER ON FIRE—A BLUE’S PROMPTITUDE—MY LORD DUKE—ROYAL DEATHS.

My second evening at this seat of gaiety was passed at the Master of the Ceremonics’ ball. The universal respect in which this gentleman was held, had drawn together a large assemblage of rank and fashion. The leading star of the place, Colonel Berkeley, and the gentlemen of the Hunt, attended in their handsome full dress and were, as fine a body of men as eye could look upon; for the honour of my own county, I must add, that they were principally natives.

I observed one instance of bad taste during the evening, which I cannot omit to mention. A well-known and gallant General, who had received numerous decorations and distinctions, not only from his own Sovereign, but from two or three

foreign powers, walked about the room in a plain blue coat, closely buttoned up, without a single badge to distinguish him, whilst my Lady ——, his vain and very silly wife, had adorned her turban with divers stars, crosses, and medals, honourably gained by her husband, and certainly never intended, by the donors, for such a purpose. I afterwards learnt that the General had found in his newly married wife a Commander-in-Chief, to whose will and pleasure he was constantly forced to give up his orders.

The *arbiter* who presided over this assembly was a tall handsome man, of fascinating manners. I am tempted here to go out of my usual course, and relate some particulars that I learnt of his history, some years after the period of which I now treat.

Mr. F—— had, early in life, entered the army, and, whilst still young, married a lady of family and small fortune; a carelessness as to worldly matters soon dissipated the sum which his wife had brought him; after many ineffectual struggles to repair the loss, he became more and more embarrassed, and ultimately was thrown into jail. His amiable partner, who had never reproached him, during his career of thoughtless extravagance, assured that, with that exception, he was one of the best and kindest of human beings, relin-

quished, without a murmur, the comforts and elegancies to which she had been accustomed from her birth, took a lodging near the prison in which he was confined, and, during his long incarceration, supported him by the use of her needle.

At length some relatives of her's liquidated the husband's debts, and he was once more restored to her. The loss of his commission was a sad drawback on their happiness, at his recovering his liberty. His character and conduct, during his late severe trial, had gained him powerful friends; and, by their influence, the situation of Master of the Ceremonies was obtained for him.

For some years F—— and his excellent wife lived respected, and in possession of ample means for their wants, rendered more moderate by the experience of former days. At length it pleased heaven to separate hearts that were so closely linked; Mrs. F——, after a short illness, died, regretted by those of her own sphere, and by the poor, to whom she had been a kind and considerate benefactress, as far as her limited means would allow.

To demonstrate a due esteem for her memory, it was resolved that her remains should be followed to the grave by the nobility and gentry then resident in Cheltenham. Upon the grief of the husband, only those who were upon terms of

strict intimacy had intruded; it was with him a sorrow "passing show." The day of the funeral arrived; the numerous party of gentlemen who wished to pay respect to the dead as well as the living assembled at the Rooms. This was signified to the chief mourner, who requested the indulgence of a few moments alone, in the room which contained the body of one he so dearly loved; such a request could not be refused; his friends awaited his return as the signal for the mournful procession setting out.

Many minutes elapsed, and still he did not appear—it was thought cruel to intrude upon his sorrow, and further time passed on; at length his friends became anxious, and suggested the propriety of ascending to the chamber of death, and inducing the mourner to permit the rites to commence. Two of his most intimate acquaintance undertook this delicate task—they entered the room, saw their friend, with his head reclining on the coffin, which his arms grasped—they spoke to him—no answer—they lifted him up, and discovered that he was dead! His heart had broken in the attempt to part with the mortal remains of her, whose soul, it is humbly to be hoped, his had joined in realms of eternal bliss.

It is almost needless to add that many wives, quite as exemplary, have been less lamented;

and that many widowers have mourned their wives quite as deeply, though they did not happen to die for them.

It were heartless to calculate whether or no, had our M.C. survived the first shock of his grief, he would have differed much from the generality of those, who, as a duty, "turn from the dead to the living." Enough that the instance I have recorded is a rare and poetical truth.

But to return. On the 27th, all the world, that is, the Gloucestershire world, was in motion ; making way to the race-ground, which, after toiling up some steep, narrow, and dusty roads, our party reached ; the ladies somewhat mortified at the "change that had come over" their bonnets and vestments. However, the beauty of the season, and the excellence of the sport, soon restored them to good humour.

How rapidly fled the days ; my leave of absence only extended to the 1st of September, and I was obliged to bid farewell to these kind friends and cheerful scenes, and return to London. I travelled by night, and saw Oxford by a clear and lovely moonlight ; we have Sir Walter's authority that architecture is seen to the best advantage under the mild influence of Dian's orb.

After about twenty miles' progress we ascended

a gentle slope, and made a halt, during which the *conducteur* alighted from his box. Some mysterious instinct, some sympathy which I leave to metaphysicians to define, prompted me to pop out my head, and say—

“Coachman, what is the name of this place?”

“BENSON HILL, sir,” was his true reply.

Addressed to me it had a ridiculous effect; had I or had it been otherwise called, “’twere pity of my life.” Though there was no thought of pleasing either when the other was christened, I looked round, thinking—

“Here are a pair of us!”

And as the vehicle drove off, mentally uttered—

“Good night, namesake!”

One of the first wits of the day has given this chance a value, by recording it, in an *airy* strain of his, with the complimentary assertion that Benson Hill can afford to spare a joke; but the historian of Little Pedlington can never need to borrow jests from any man, and *this* one must be of less worth to all other persons than to myself.

If ever I pass a *Pool* baptized John, I will make a brief of it in my note-book, as a locality which ought to be more proud of its appellation than the highest or oldest member of the Hill family.

I had very long and anxiously desired to be made known to Mr. Yates, of Covent Garden ; by some strange fate the opportunity had not arisen, and I began to despair of ever gaining the acquaintance of one whose talents had afforded me so much satisfaction. Towards the end of September, however, the long wished for introduction took place. I am thus particular (empowered by a "Journal," valuable to *me*, for no *unkind* reasons), as, for many years, an intimacy, almost a brotherhood, existed between us, and I shall have frequent occasions to speak of my *dear* friend.

Full well aware of my affection for things theatrical, Yates asked me to dine with him on the 30th, on which evening he could take me to see Drury Lane lit up, previous to its opening. A hearty welcome, and the best dinner a bachelor in lodgings could provide, awaited me. Soon after our repast, Fairfield, and two brothers, named D——, joined our party ; to the latter I was formally introduced, and we speedily became a right merry set.

Yates shone little in general conversation, but was capital audience for a joke, and possessed great comic powers, in relating anecdotes and traits of men connected with the theatre ; a theme which could not fail to please and interest me.

At the appointed hour we repaired to Drury Lane. I was amused at the novelty of the exhibition — the stage, instead of being devoted to its purpose, was thronged with gentlemen of the press, busily employed in taking notes of the embellishments, and the rapid succession of new scenery, which elicited approbation from all present. A supper was provided in the saloon for the Manager's immediate friends; and although included in Yates's invitation, I took my leave, promising to visit town the evening he was to appear in Falstaff, at Covent Garden.

I kept my word, and can honestly affirm that I was amply repaid; it was a magnificent piece of acting, admirably conceived in the true spirit of its immortal author, and executed with consummate skill. That others thought with me, I need only state the fact that the soliloquy on Honour was as nearly as possible *encored*, so rapturous and prolonged was the applause at its termination, and so vehement the desire to hear it again; but, with great propriety, Yates did not accede to a (then) almost unprecedented demand.

Some time after this, at Yates's lodgings, I met a person who has since occupied a vast portion of public attention — it was no other than Mr. Roland Stephenson, then regarded as a demi-god, by most of the theatrical craft. I must honestly

avow that he made a most unfavourable impression upon me at our first meeting ; his air was patronising, though any thing but elegant, and there was a sinister expression in his remarkably plebeian visage that ill-accorded with the consequential airs he gave himself.

It was my fate, in the first month of 1820, to be introduced to a person still more notorious than the Banker became, when he found it expedient to make a hasty retreat to the land of liberty and democracy.

I was staying with my family near Bristol, and was asked by a young artillery-man, a fellow townsman, to accompany him to a quadrille party at Clifton, where he assured me I should "meet some very nice girls, and have a capital supper ;" the first of these inducements was sufficient, and I consented, without inquiring the name of the person we were to visit. Gore and myself got into a "Number coach," for so Hackney vehicles are there denominated, and proceeded to a spacious mansion on New Windsor Terrace. Addressing the lady of the house, Gore said —

"Mrs. Whitelock, allow me to present my friend Hill, of the Artillery."

Very graciously the lady replied that she was at all times delighted to see military men, and I

bowed in return, without clearly having caught the name of so polite a hostess. Gore then led me to the master of the house, and I heard him addressed as "General." I could scarcely believe it — but, sure enough, it was *the* General Whitelock; who stood before me, surrounded by a large assemblage of wealth and fashion. To add to my astonishment, I saw the officers of the Recruiting-staff of the district, wearing His Majesty's uniform, eagerly entering into conversation with this disgrace to the service. I was in plain clothes, and would have left at once, but Gore begged me to stop; and, as the weather was inclement, I was induced to remain until our Jarvey arrived to convey us through the snow.

The excellent supper which my companion had foretold certainly deserved such an appellation; the tables were covered with the good things of the world, and ornamented from top to bottom with *military trophies*; whilst a full length portrait of the Buenos Ayres hero, in his general's uniform, occupied a conspicuous part of the dining-room. I never witnessed such shameless effrontery; the man himself was as coarse and vulgar a person as I ever encountered, of an ungainly figure, and with a face of brass.

Learning from the papers that Yates was starrng at Bath, I resolved to pay a visit to

that gay city. I found him in unusually good spirits, and every way satisfied with the result of his trip. I attended the theatre, and had the gratification of seeing the prominent characters of Brutus and Cassius sustained by men in whose fate I felt a deep interest. Warde enacted the high souled Roman; Yates, the lean and hungry conspirator.

A trifling circumstance, occurred, which occasioned considerable amusement to those near enough to be aware of the fact, but almost paralyzed the exertions of the actor for the rest of the evening. Yates, in his first scene, had to deliver the passage —

“ I, as Æneas, our great ancestor,
Did, from the flames of Troy, upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tyber,” &c.

This, by some unaccountable nervousness, he gave as follows—

“ I, as Æneas, our great ancestor,
Did, from the flames of Tiber, upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Troy”—

It happened that the venerable Mrs. Piozzi was sitting in the stage box, close to the Proscenium, and such a ludicrous perversion of her darling Shakspeare could not pass unnoticed; in her enthusiasm she cried aloud—

“ Text, Mr. Yates, text; *flames* of TROY, *waves* of TYBER, if you please.”

This unexpected correction nearly swamped poor Cassius; he seemed half disposed to laugh, or fly the field, and let Mrs. Piozzi finish the part for him; but an assurance in an under tone from Warde, that the lady's prompting had not been observed by the audience, induced him to proceed; and having, in the course of the scene, perfectly recovered his self-possession, he addressed, most pointedly, to the companion of Johnson, the speech running—

“ I am glad that my *weak words* .

Have struck but this much show of fire from Brutus.”

I volunteered my services for the evening of Yates's benefit; the farce of “ High Life below Stairs” was selected for the occasion. “ My Lord Duke” had ever been one of my most especial favourites. I found the members of the theatre, both ladies and gentlemen, well disposed towards me, and took the liberty of suggesting an alteration from the usual arrangement of the piece, which they kindly agreed on; to my great satisfaction it was completely successful on its being carried into effect. My notion was, instead of retaining the minuet with Mrs. Kitty, to propose a quadrille, a species of dance then of recent introduction.

Handing the lady who presided over the festivities a fan, she read from it, in vulgar kitchen English, the French varieties of figure—

“Now then,” said Mrs. Kitty, “what shall it be, my Lord, *Letty* or *Pantaloons*, *Bull and gear*, or *Leeremeese*? deary me’s, what queer words! or what is this? *Lay powl*—well, I never!”

“Oh, we’ll try *Letty* first,” joined in Yates, who played Sir Harry. “Now then, Mrs. Kitty, call the figure, if you please.”

The lady obeyed as follows — “*Dossadoss Demmy kewdeechat, Cavey leer sewel,*” &c.

The audience treated me with extreme kindness, and rewarded my desire to serve my friend by warm plaudits. Warde congratulated me on my improvement in the histrionic art; as he had not seen me attempt a part since I was the representative of his lady mother, there certainly had been plenty of time for it.

Our gaiety received an unexpected and severe check by the arrival of news of the sudden demise of His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent. So noble and gallant a man to be cut off in the very prime of manhood, and so shortly after Heaven had blest him with a daughter, was indeed to be deplored; and I could not but feel it the more acutely, remembering so vividly his condescension to me at Dover.

On the following Sunday the Bristol mail brought the information of the decease of our

venerable and beloved monarch. The messenger charged with this important intelligence had just entered the London road from the Windsor, when he met the mail ; his haste only permitted him to say, " His Majesty expired at thirty-five minutes past eight o'clock this evening."

By this announcement the event was known in Bristol nearly as soon as in the metropolis. Great anxiety was manifested for the receipt of the official account, and hundreds awaited the arrival of the Regulator day-coach.

A heavy shower drove me to share the shelter of a pent-house, with a gentleman so carefully muffled up against the inclemencies of the season, that I could not see his face. He appeared most nervously anxious to obtain the truth, fidgeted about, tapping his upper lip with his worsted gloved hand, in a rapid and peculiar manner. The shower increased, and we drew nearer to each other. I hope I shall not be accused of disloyalty or disrespect when I record the words that first issued from the lips of my companion, I recognising, by their intonation, Mr. Macready, Sen., the Bristol manager.

" I wonder," he said, looking up at the full charged clouds, " I wonder if this is the *reign* of George III., or George IV."

CHAPTER XVIII.

A PRETTY DECENT TUMBLE — SELF-APPRECIATION — CRISPIN'S BENEVOLENCE — COCKNEY CATS — ARSON — NEWS FROM THE ANTIPODES — THE ENGRAVER FORGING HIS OWN FETTERS — ELECTION — DROLLERIES.

ON the 3rd of February the ceremony of proclaiming his Majesty, George IV. was performed with suitable dignity; and in the evening of this day I attended, by invitation, at the Merchants' Hall; where the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen, of the ancient and (then) loyal city had prepared a splendid desert, and abundance of excellent wine, in which their fellow citizens drank the health of their new sovereign. Many loyal and patriotic speeches were made; and that staunch Tory, and excellent man, Alderman Daniel, distinguished himself by a very able and energetic address to the numerous assembly.

My townsman, and old schoolfellow, Arthur Lawrence, cousin to Sir Thomas, was a young and handsome surgeon, who, beneath the most amiable address, veiled a fund of humour, and, by

right of birth, possessed eminent graphic powers, though *he* depicted characters but by spoken words.

I remember a double anecdote of his, which I must relate. New Windsor Terrace, Clifton, abruptly overlooks a high rocky precipice, above the Avon. Its terminating wall at that time stood open to the public, topped by a rather low, slight iron rail. A gentleman was driving his tilbury along the carriage road there, I do not know if he knew why, or whether he thought the way led to any thing except a good view of the Leigh woods, I cannot say; nor can I say whether his horse took fright, or' was lashed, or stung to fury, or heard the baying of Sir Hugh Smith's hounds, from the opposite side of the river; forgot the equipage at its tail, and resolved on a sporting leap, such a *Somerset* as had never before been seen in Glostershire! Enough that the animal reared, and threw itself over; the stout traces broke not, though the railing did; a poor young sweep had just time to drag the driver out, ere the vehicle followed its steed. The wonder was that the boy did not forfeit his own life, without preserving that of the stranger.

This loser of "cob and cab," bewildered by his recent risk, the suddenness and violence of his own pull down, slipped something into honest

Smut's hand, then hurried away. I believe no one had witnessed this "work of a moment" but Arthur; who, now running up, found chummy with a smile black and bitter as his soot, regarding the sixpence, which contrasted brightly with his own palm.

"Is that what the gentleman gave you?" asked my friend.

"Ees, zur," grinned the lad, "he da know his own valley best, zee. If I could a lugged back the oss, that *mought* a bin wuth zumat."

Arthur, with praises and presents, took down the address of this grimy philosopher, rested not till he found the saved-unknown, extorting "something handsome" from him, as the beginning of a subscription for the humble hero.

Lawrence's next impulse was one of peculiarly English curiosity, to view the spot on which the tilbury had fallen; accordingly he wended his way "under the rocks." Directly beneath New Windsor, facing the water, was a small patch of swampy ground, adorned by two cabbages and a gooseberry bush, a pig-sty, and a hovel, not much larger; above the door of which shone a board, conspicuously lettered, with—

"SHOOS AND BOTES MAID AND MENDID HEAR. JNO. IGGINS."

Arthur hailed the house; a diminutive old man

came forth, and was asked, what he knew of the recent fall.

“What do I know?” he repeated crossly. “Ah that’s what every body do ax. Come here a worreting I away from my fine work and plantations. ‘Poor gentleman!’ cries one, ‘Poor gig!’ says t’other, ‘Poor sweep!’ draws this, ‘Poor beast!’ snivels yon. Never once *pooring* me and mine, or making us a bit the richer for satisfying ’em, not they. The shabby sons o’ ——’s even took away the horse’s carcass, though his hide might have been useful in my purfession. Poor beast, forsooth! You just come with me, squire; look at *my* dear animal, fat as bacon he were, before he got that shock. I wish you could ha sid un, staring up in wonder, as the stupid concern came scrambling neck and heels, hoofs and wheels, down over us! precious heavy mess to fling a top o’ a bed of greens. If they two fellers had bin in it my fruit would have been as bad off as *my* vegetles; but take thy wash, boy! none the worst for the spiled savoy. Poor piggy, den! did un come down wid un’s hosses and gigs, a purpose to frighten us? nation hard they couldn’t pitch upon any body else’s establishment for their splash-dash tricks. They’ll be driving mail coaches down at us next, child! but do ee eat, and enjoy thyself, or thee won’t be fit for the *knife* these three months.”

Arthur paid Mr. "Iggins" for this display of self-reference and disinterested humanity. Nature is the same in all stations. Rousseau, Byron, Mathews, had the cobbler's knack of painfully over calculating their own influence; deeming events, in reality fortuitous, contrived against their individual feelings and interests, till they believed no flea could bite them but from professional envy, or political hostility. Do not many of us feel, while dynasties are toppling round, "Stumble where you like, so you don't interfere with *our* comforts?" And have not we sometimes pampered bores, wishing them to thrive just until we could be sure of their leaving us fat legacies? Have we not regretted the fall of more valuable animals, merely because *we* rather lost than gained by it?—while, in the sensation it created, the world mingled no sympathy with *our* important pigs, and consequential cabbages!

Towards the end of the month a great alarm was created by the news of the Cato Street conspiracy reaching our city. The assassination of Ministers was not *then* deemed a venial offence; the tri-coloured flag, that emblem of anarchy and butchery, had not yet floated in the streets of the metropolis, to its eternal shame and disgrace.

I rejoined my regiment, on the day consecrated to St. David, and on the 3rd accompanied my

friend Bartlett, of the Foreign Office, to see the wretches who had conceived the diabolical plan of cold-blooded murder, under the abused name of patriotism.

By the politeness of Mr. Planta we were admitted; Thistlewood still retained an air of superiority above his fellows, former habits and associations had not all been forgotten, whilst mingling with these “common dungeon ruffians.” Ings, the butcher, was the *beau ideal* of a mob leader, worthy of the school of Danton and Robespierre; the only decent-looking person amongst this group of scoundrels was the black man, who doubtless anticipated some office of high dignity and emolument, in the event of their hellish purposes having succeeded to the extent of their wishes.

One of the Bow Street officers was still suffering from a wound he received in capturing these wretches. I got into chat with him, and, by recommending him to place his arm in a sling, as an alleviation to his pain, gained his good graces so much as to obtain considerable information on the subject of the seizure of this knot of demons.

One observation that he made struck me as being very much to the purpose —

“ ’Tis too late now, sir; poor Smithers is dead and gone; but I *do* say, that if Mr. Birnie

had taken the precaution to let us have a few dark lanterns, Smithers wouldn't have been murdered, and not one of the scoundrels could have got off; but they knocked the lights out, and all the mischief was done in the dark."

On my return to quarters the following day, I found that the garrison had been thrown into a state of considerable excitement. A married brother officer of mine, living in Mulgrave Place, within a stone's throw of the barracks, had invited some friends to pass the evening with him; his rooms being small, one of the whist tables was placed as close to a corner of the parlour as possible—the gentleman who occupied the seat nearest the wall suddenly asked his friend—

"Who lives at next door?"

"An old man, a great invalid, I fancy," replied C—— "I see him but seldom, crawling about his garden."

"Well then," replied the other, "the poor soul must have had a fit, I should fear; for I heard a heavy fall this moment, and the walls are not so thick that I could be mistaken. Shall we go and offer our assistance?"

"Oh no, he has a housekeeper, and sometimes a gunner helps in the garden."

No further attention was paid to the subject by our party, but, at an early hour in the morn-

ing, fire was observed issuing from Mr. Parker's house.

A black man, who played the Bashaw in our band, was the first person who made an entry into the dwelling. He found the half-consumed remains of the proprietor, lying on the parlour floor, surrounded by evidence of his violent death, and the body of the aged housekeeper in the passage, also nearly destroyed by the flames. The fire was speedily extinguished ; on examining the premises, it appeared that blankets had been fastened to the windows to screen the parties from observation whilst the pillage was effected ; and although it was evident, from combustibles being discovered in the kitchen and upper-floor, that the destruction of the house was intended ; the precaution taken to prevent these foul deeds from being seen had positively been the means of preserving the house and the remains of the mutilated persons from total destruction.

The old man, whose brief span of days had been thus shortened by the knife of the assassin, was known to few, if any, of his neighbours.

This deed of blood was remarkable for its similarity to the destruction of Mr. Bird and his housekeeper, at Greenwich, in the year 1818.

It was afterwards ascertained that the ears of the officer I have mentioned had not been de-

ceived as regarded a heavy fall, for the unfortunate old woman was found lying close to the other side of the wall, against which his chair was placed, and it was her death-blow which had occasioned the noise he had remarked. Had his advice been taken, life might have been spared, or the miscreant caught in the fact.

The authorities, both civil and military, exerted themselves to the utmost to detect the murderer ; but for some time without success. Of his ultimate fate I shall have occasion to make mention at a future time.

About this period I received a letter from Major Wallis, a gentleman with whom I had been on terms of intimacy whilst quartered with him in Limerick, apprising me that he had just returned from New South Wales, and that he was anxious to see me in town, to consult on a matter connected with his late residence, as well as to show me the extensive collection he had made of natural curiosities, whilst sojourning in that then almost unknown region.

I lost no time in visiting my friend, was warmly received, and professed my readiness to forward his views as far as my humble ability could avail. Before he entered on business, however, he favoured me with a sight of the rare and curious animals, which he had with vast

pains, and considerable expense, conveyed to this country. They were all in a state of perfect preservation.

To my friend, the Major, we are indebted for the first specimen ever seen in England of that playful freak of nature, the *Ornithorynchus Paradoxus*, a creature somewhat larger than a mole, covered with a thick and glossy fur, with the tail of a beaver, and the flat bill of a bird, producing its young by a deposit of eggs, and afterwards suckling the hatched amphibii.

It may here be as well to relate that, when this identical specimen was presented to Sir Joseph Banks, the learned baronet, after thanking Wallis for so rare and curious a gift, requested him to "obtain, if possible, another of these singular little animals, before the natives had amused themselves by carving a bas-relief on its flat bill;" and the astonishment of Sir Joseph was considerably increased, when Wallis assured him that the ornamental volute, to be found on the head of the creature, was the effect of nature solely, and only in keeping with a thing so justly denominated *Paradoxus*.

Among the insect tribe was a winged creature, equal in size to the firefly, with this extraordinary characteristic—two-thirds of its body (the whole of which was transparent) appeared unoc-

cupied by any object connected with its economy, the upper part containing the stomach, &c., was nearly black, and the sustenance of this singular fly — leaves and grass — was evaporated by perspiration. Nature had not given it that which is so essential to the firing of either cannon or small arms. Incredible as this may appear, let my reader only look upon the *Ornithorynchus*, and he will readily receive this statement as truth.

“And now, my dear Hill,” said the amiable Major, “I must beg your advice and assistance on what I am going to relate to you. Some years ago I was ordered from Sidney, to take command of a new settlement, called Newcastle ; and, before my removal, desired my servant to find some person capable of engraving my name and regiment on my trunks, canteen, &c. My desire was quickly carried into effect, and I was struck with the masterly manner in which my orders had been executed, sent for the poor fellow who had done the work, and, whilst paying him, inquired if he had been accustomed to this employment in England.

“‘Sir,’ said the man, in a tone of deep melancholy, ‘I was, for many years, one of the principal workmen at Mr. Arrowsmith’s, the map engraver. I was in receipt of three guineas a week. I worked hard, and was well paid. I had a good and kind master, and ought to have been

content, but, sir,' and he sighed deeply, 'but the Devil tempted me to listen to the offer of a Birmingham man, who was extensively engaged in forgeries upon various country banks; his terms were but too seductive; I devoted my spare time to his purpose, little dreaming of consequences, was discovered, tried, and sent to perpetual banishment, leaving a fond wife and three children to bear the disgrace attached to my name, and suffer, after years of comfort, all the bitterness of shame and poverty. It was a fatal hour for me when first I learnt to form letters.' "

" Unhappy man ! you have interested me about him : pray proceed, my dear Wallis."

" You know I was always fond of drawing,— I had made several sketches of scenery, and one or two groups of the natives; the idea occurred that I might employ this poor fellow to engrave them; the convict cheerfully undertook the task, and, although the only material I could procure for the purpose was some sheets of ship copper, notwithstanding that, and various other difficulties, which the man had to encounter during his task, he completed it, *à merveille*: but you shall see."

Saying which he produced the plates, the first specimen of that branch of the arts ever undertaken in the new world, Australasia. The engravings exceeded my expectations.

“ I am convinced that impressions from these would be eagerly purchased, not only from the remarkable history attached to them, but as conveying such clever and, doubtless, faithful portraits of the scenes they represent.—

“ Business of the first importance calls me to Ireland ; I have not time to make the slightest arrangement for their publication ; it was relying on your friendship that I have mentioned the subject, in the hope that *you* will act for me in this affair.”

I promised, and the Major hastened to his native country, where a beauty and a fortune were awaiting his arrival. Leaving him to all the joys of the *lune de miel*, I lost no time in busying myself on his behalf.

The first house I applied to was Ackermann's. I had an interview with the excellent and liberal proprietor, who perfectly agreed with me as to the singularity of the plates, and the interest they would probably excite, but he assured me they would not sell unless accompanied by letter-press.

The Major's descriptions were too limited ; after some inquiry I was fortunate enough to find a gentleman who had visited the colony, and by his aid, and having recourse to the few works then extant on New South Wales, I contrived to get sufficient matter together to suit the pub-

lisher's views, and a volume was speedily given to the public, which, in after days, when that mighty portion of the Eastern world is divided into kingdoms or republics, will be looked on as an extraordinary specimen of its infant history, embellished by the hands of one of its early military rulers, assisted by the industry of a felon settler.

Early in the month of April I went to town to meet my sister, who was about to share a cottage I had taken in Nightingale Vale ; strange to say, a real valley, in which Philomel and all her family *did* sing, night and day. There I had a long garden, with a brook at the bottom of it, like a fop's coat, trimmed down each side with frogs.

From the windows of the Hungerförd, then kept by Mrs. Tart, we witnessed the chairing of Burdett and Hobhouse, like "two kings of Brentford on one throne." A banner-bearer, whose standard was "Purity of Election," silvered on white satin, had moistened his throat for giving voice to the shouts of "No King, no Constitution, no nawthink ! Sir Francis for ever ! Triangular Parleyments, and Universal Sufferings !"

He was so patriotically drunk that a slight push from the crowd upset him into the kennel ; he regained the flags, but when he raised *his own*,

its silk and silver "Purity" was half-concealed by London mud. The accident was apt enough to tickle my Toryism, and would have told well in Hood's "Progress of Cant."

My sister, as at Dover, was soon called on by every lady worth knowing; a mutual cordiality also existed between her and my male friends. The matronage of an eligible chaperon enabled Isabel to receive the élite of them; and even Barlow confessed that our little parties were always well-assorted, adding—

"Now some inviters have no more notion as to the fitness of things, the who and who should come together, than the dunce who hung up as pairs whatever pictures accorded in size, matching that scene in Hogarth where figures the reeling, abstracted train-band's man, with the classic subject of Hipparchus recommending Anacreon to Pisistratus, the politest of princes."

Our ladies heard such historical illustrations with liberal gravity. I could not help contrasting them with a dame of the old school, to whose daughter a gentleman once talked of a work by *the d'Israeli*, of the Romans, Grecians, tragic unities of time and place, the Stagyrte who described and defined them. At this juncture, the mother hurried her child away; complaining to a male relative, that their guest had been using very

indecorous language. For her the words "Sexagenarian," "toga virilis," and "ovation," meant nothing but mischief.

"Above all," she whispered, "tell him, that if he ever again dares breathe the name of *that old villain* in my girl's hearing, I'll horsewhip him, as sure as he's alive."

Happy Barlow, he had not to fear such hard and arbitrary measures; his wit, with impunity, "made increment of every thing," but, as he allowed —

"Circumstances must minister occasions. The courtesan who ate Lord Somebody's ten pound note, between her slices of French roll, could not have been so witty with hard gold; we owe *that* jest to the paper currency, and 'tis well to owe it something."

He was a wit, rather *too* great for jumping, and with most people, sore on the subject of his fast increasing bulk; but, on my complaining of a pain in the small of my back, he said —

"I wish you could give it me. I should like such a place to have a pain in; but my back has no small left."

Barlow's satire spared not even the softer sex. A very talkative lady having fallen ill, somebody said —

"There's but one chance. They must *keep her perfectly quiet*."

“Egad, then,” cried the Captain, “they must kill instead of curing her.”

The “feline favourite” of a married flirt had been mischievously bereft of its “vertebra’s pendent termination,” to the great annoyance of its mistress.

“Tut!” laughed Barlow, “she’s glad enough at heart; it is not for her interest to keep *tale-bearers* in her house.”

An inviting acquaintance omitting a single letter in a note to him, elicited this reply—

“You must have written in a Hell of a hurry. You ask me to meet a few select *fiends*. I shall be Devilish glad to come.”

Talking of letters, he used to vow that a worthy doctor of our’s, writing to borrow his man, for a party, spelt as he always pronounced—“Dear Captain, can you lend me your *omo*?”

This kind of man is generally addicted to learned classic and foreign phrases; ’tis said that the same medicus called his children “his little progenitors.”

Barlow’s wit was not always repeatable, yet he could imply a bit of harmless dirt in a way which even ladies forgave. Walking one day in his garden, near our’s, a bee, attracted by his perfumed cuffs, kept buzzing round his ear.

“Go, you fool,” said he, “you’ll find no *honey*

there, though you *may* wax—wroth at your disappointment.”

A heavy rain had washed the *gravel* over the border, and brought the *worms* out of the soil. Barlow pointed, saying—

“ Two serious evils to come at once.”

“ Your gardener must look to it,” said I ; “ a rake and a little lime will set it all to rights.”

“ Faith,” he answered, “ I think I’d better bid ’Arris bring some blackberry jam and Ching’s lozenges.”

CHAPTER XIX.

A BLUE BEARD—A PICTURE AFTER WILKIE—MY SCHOOL-MASTER—GATHERING IN THE SILLER—THE SHOVEL HAT—BLACK HEATH MAC HEATH—LIFE DEARER THAN CHARACTER—TAKING THE BULL BY THE HORNS.

As a contrast to the Medical man, to whom I alluded in my last chapter, let me now speak of one of our Doctors, who shone a star of the first magnitude, surrounded by the foggy meteors that were to be seen in the hemisphere of the Ordnance Hospital. Beard, or, as he was usually hailed, Tom Beard, “by his familiars,” was devoted to the poetry of his profession, and pre-eminently skilful; so anxious to keep his steadiness of hand, and clearness of sight, that he never exceeded lady’s allowance of wine; nor did he need any stimulants to sustain his versatile, eccentric, fantastic vivacity. Learned, travelled, elegant, accomplished, full of music and quotations, a free-thinker on all subjects, Beard was, in his way, a greater favourite with the fair than

many a prettier fellow. By the by, he had a fine figure, fine hands, eyes, and teeth. In the midst of speaking "most scholarly and wisely," would he draw forth a torn scrap of newspaper, and extemporize mock advertisements from it thus: "'Children cutting their teeth are respectfully informed'—um, 'Should this meet the eye of the late Dr. Dodd—hear of something to his advantage.' 'Now exhibiting, by permission of the Dublin College of Surgeons, the skull of Oliver Cromwell when an infant ;' um—Oh, nothing of interest in the provincial press. This is an Isle of Wight journal, the Cowes Courant."

I believe he was the first of our set who refined upon common expressions; seeing in butchers' shops "a sanguinary Jacobus" or "unsteady Robert," instead of sheeps' heads, and precocious veal, which liberal shepherds give far grosser names.

On some expected fellow-guest of his disappointing us, he said—

"May he participate perdition with his antique metallic utensil! Without him then will we consume our Cambrian Coney."

What pathetic, what spirit-stirring pictures of life has he broken off, just as our interest was at its height by singing,

"And this his the vay has ve pore fellers lives,
Vot dies hin the hisles of Jimaco!"

A strong contrast to him was his constant companion Seaton—good name for a doctor!—an excellent and clever man, but a most original character. His manner was so odd that every one at first sight believed it assumed; but the humourist never put it off. He reminded me of the stolid Wilkinson, whose queer aspect makes all its beholders roar, while he seems to sit unconscious, in imperturbable gravity.

“Tim,” as Seaton was called, though his christian name might have been Horatio—had just Geoffrey Muffincap’s meek quaint simplicity. On he purred, his low slow words glued together, or melted into one another, in an unvarying tune of delicious tediousness, till you thought the hum of his *no* voice would never cease. He chose to be a butt, an unlaughing laughing-stock, a burlesque on matter of fact, a caricature of common-place, a walking satire on twaddle.

Tim would come early to your parties, his straight smooth black hair *bowl-cut round* his square pink face, (to avail myself of a late statesman’s geometrical grammar,) yet would he deliberately “beg pardon for being late,” adding—

“I only stopped to have my hair curled.”

Then, seating himself in a corner, he would demurely fold his hands before him, twirling their thumbs in unmoved placidity of muscle, while joke

and repartee ran round, calling forth the risibility of all but himself. At last Tim would fidget gently, as if for leave to speak, hem, cast down his eyes, and drawl—

“ I’m very willing to amuse too, if I’m let. May be you never heard what happened to me in my last journey up to London.”

Then would he perseveringly inflict on us some long, three times thrice-told tale, barren of point or catastrophe, as Mathews’ Mrs. M’Knightisms, concluding—

“ I thought it my duty just to mention it, to say a word or two, because it is very interesting. I’ve left out the particulars, but, if any body likes, I’ll tell it all over again.”

When our musical friends had given us one of Bishop’s Shakspearian songs, Tim would look round with timid benevolence, and buz—

“ I can sing too, if it will oblige ; one—little—short ballad—very affecting, if you take it in the right light ; it won’t occupy much time, and I’m sure none of you ever heard it before.”

Now if any man present had *not* enjoyed this feast he was certain to prove its *least* diverted partaker ; for Tim’s song improved on acquaintance. It is too long for insertion here, yet if, at its tenth stanza, you attempted to stop the singer, he would drily plead—

“Don’t interrupt me just in the *beginning* of it !”

His favourite toast was “Success to Prosperity !”

Barlow was once mentioning that a certain actor had been hissed, his lower drapery being damaged ; the Captain added—

“He did not carry it off well.”

“I dare say,” said Tim, “he carried it off as quick as ever he could.”

The words, nothing in themselves, were resistless from his lips.

Amongst the friends to whom I had the pleasure of introducing my sister, was my excellent old preceptor, Dr. Watson, of whom I shall relate what once befel him, before I had the advantage of his instructions.

The Rev. Dr. Watson was chaplain to the Countess of Elgin, when that lady resided at Shrewsbury House, Shooter’s Hill, with her pupil, the Princess Charlotte of Wales. The learned and pious Doctor, in addition to his clerical duties, had the honour of assisting in her Royal Highness’s early education ; for this office a competent salary was allowed, which he received in London, every half-year, from the appointed agent.

It was on the occasion of one of these visits to town, that he bethought him of certain sums due to him from the parents and guardians of the lads whom he was in the habit of preparing for their

first military appointments, as Gentlemen Cadets, “teaching their young ideas how to *shoot*,” by theoretically expounding the science of gunnery, in which he well knew they would soon have no lack of *practice*.

Taking advantage, accordingly, of his trip to London, he gathered in the siller from most of the sources whence it ought naturally to flow ; so that the sum total of the collection formed a very considerable “consideration ;” but his calls on the various parties concerned detained him in the metropolis till nearly ten o’clock of a clear though starless and moonless night, early in January.

I am thus particular, at *my* outset, to avoid the necessity for explanations or repetitions, when once my worthy divine has commenced *his* journey homeward. Ere he does so, it behoves me to describe himself and equipage.

A wit once said to me—

“Dark grey’s the best hue all experience teaches,
If not for hair, for horses, eyes, and—pantaloons.”

He “might have rhymed,” but this should-have-been couplet gives a tolerable idea of the close covering to the Doctor’s well-formed head, and of the deep-set eyes, of piercing twinkle, which lit up a visage wherein intellect, benevolence, and the due gravity of his calling, blended with an almost humorous cheerfulness, which rendered him, out of

school, the best *raconteur* amongst us—I must not say story-teller, for Dr. Watson was all truth and orthodoxy. Orthodox was he, not only as regarded all *articles* of religion, but in those less numerous of his own attire. The suit of sables, though of the most exemplary broad-cloth, and bearing evidence of the hand of a Master—*tailor*, was scrupulously simple in its fashion; knee-breeches, with silver buckles, incased his nether limbs, finished (at home) by speckled silk stockings (dark grey again) and well-polished shoes; but, whenever he travelled, the Doctor wore boots—nor jockey, nor Hessian, nor jack, but cut round in a straight line at the top, shaped somewhat like carronades, and high enough to meet his lower garments; a plaited stock encompassed his neck; his hat was of the most precise shovel-pattern, looped up at the sides, so as to narrow the back part, and lend additional dignity to the broad brim which shaded his brow; nor was the silk rosette too large, or too small, by the tithe of an inch.

Broad-brimmed, too, may I call his one-horse chaise. Roomy, cumbersome, with huge leathern head; it was what his friends called a good sensible chaise, and what chaise could be sensible without a head? Could such a piece of antiquity, however, be looked on now, by our modern scientific designers of carriages, they would scarcely believe in its hav-

ing been driven "any time these thousand years;" but of one thing I am certain, that they would not accuse it of ever having been too giggish even for a doctor of divinity.

The animal which drew this ponderous, though convenient vehicle, was fitted by nature to his fate; sleek, well fed, and sedate as a Spanish archbishop's mule; he dreamt not of a Greenwich rail-road, nor of the speed now to be witnessed thereon; but, like a sagacious servant (as most of your slow and sures are), decided that the only safe and pleasant rate of travelling for his valued master was brown George's own pace of four miles an hour.

At a livery stable, on the Surrey side of Westminster Bridge, Dr. Watson "put up" his equipage, whenever he came to town; but the ostler, on hearing his order "to put to," at ten o'clock, exclaimed, cordially—

"Deart heart alive! who'd have thought it, sir? Why, I made sure, sir, you was going to stop in Lunnon all night. I've been in three minds about littering down old Georgy and giving un his supper. I never know'd 'e so back'ard afore, your rev'rance. The Lord send 'e safe home to your wife and family! for you've a baddish bit to go; confested with them as don't stand on no trifles. 'Money or life' is all them chaps do say!"

This "d—d good-natured friend's" broad hints

as to the perils of the road failed to deter the stout Doctor from seating himself in his chaise, which he drove out of the yard, to the accompaniment of honest Jim's repeated warning—

“ Mark my words, Master ! you may wish you'd taken a fool's advice ; but Lud a massy send 'e safe home ! that's all the harm *I* do wish 'e ! ”

Steady George soon brought his master to the turnpike, about half a mile beyond the Bricklayer's Arms. At the sound of wheels the collector issued from his minute mansion, recognized the traveller, put his foot on the step of the chaise, and leaning forward, whispered—

“ Be on your guard, sir ! *They* are out to-night ! ”

Thus satisfying his conscience, he flung open the gate, closed it after the driver, and re-entered the toll-house.

The lovers of white bait, the visitants of fair or college, now find almost one continuous street from London to Greenwich ; but, at the time with which I deal, not more than three houses, and those off the road, existed between the turnpike just left behind and the Centurion at Deptford. Nursery grounds and asparagus-beds occupied the way sides, and, in sooth, to quote our raven Jim, it was “ a baddish bit.” Yet the ostler's croakings had not affected the Doctor as did the brief emphatic cau-

tion from him of the pike against those of the pistol. His anxiety was now awakened for the "great charge" he carried, and the next to certainty of being met by some of the moon's minions, such as, before and since the immortal attack at Gadshill, have conspired to confer upon this district a redoubtable and by no means desirable notoriety. Yet the Doctor had promised Mrs. Watson to sleep at home; and, could he *ever* have broken his word, he must have kept faith in such a case. So feeling, as became him, that whatever might happen *must* be for the best, he heroically concluded his mental soliloquy with—

"I care not what man can do unto me !"

Nevertheless, it was not without a sense of alarm that he presently beheld two horsemen a few paces before him, proceeding at an almost walk, apparently in earnest conversation.

What was to be done? Returning were as tedious as going o'er; besides, he had resolved to brave all danger and push on. Therefore, jerking the rein to stimulate the exertion of his trusty nag, he was shortly a step a-head of the equestrians, who saluted him with a "Good night," in such hearty, honest tones, as well nigh disarmed suspicion. In return for their courtesy, he echoed—

"Good night !" adding, "and a pleasant journey to ye, gentlemen."

"We are not going far," answered one; "for we hear the road is unsafe, and have no taste for losing watch, money—perhaps more."

"I wonder," put in the other, "to see you, sir, alone at this time and place; but perhaps we are misled, and ought to be ashamed of ourselves for having owned our fears to a gentleman who seems to care little for the ill name of the neighbourhood."

"Gentlemen," resumed the Doctor, with as nonchalant an air as he could assume, "I often travel this road, and believe that I have discovered the secret of how to escape robbery."

"Indeed, what is it?" asked one of the horsemen quickly.

"Why, in the first place, I never carry any thing about me worth taking; and, in the second, I should never offer any resistance—so I don't think there's a gentleman on the road, from Blackheath to Barham Downs, who would disgrace himself by maltreating a poor fellow, old enough to be his father; for *they* are mostly young men, and must be brave ones, who follow *the calling*, you know."

"True," replied the shortest rider; and turning to his companion, concluded, "Well then, I say, Captain, as the gentleman's prad is none of the quickest, and we've business on hand, let's be jogging."

"With all my heart," quoth his friend; "once

again good night t'ye, sir." And off they rode at a smart pace.

The Doctor doted on their absence ; his charitable opinion, founded on their first addresses, was banished by those ominous words "captain" and "business," either dropped inadvertently, or spoken with a candour at once defying his power, and claiming his gratitude for their confiding forbearance.

Reaching Deptford, he perceived that the people of the public-house had not yet retired to bed ; he felt tempted to prevail on one of the inn's militia to escort him home ; but remembering that a league frequently existed between that class of persons and those he dreaded to encounter, he refrained from asking protection so equivocal. To shake off "thick coming fancies," often more intimidating than bodily assailants, on he drove.

From the Broadway, to midway up Blackheath hill the security afforded by houses *thickly scattered*, if I may be allowed such a phrase, served to tranquillize his nerves for the time ; but still his spirit felt the consciousness that he had before him yet the very worst part of Jim's "baddish bit." Leisurely did the old horse wend his way up the precipitous hill, crowned by the Green Man, famed for its spacious ball-room, and long, low, and narrow tea-room, where bad hyson, worse coffee, and discourse

as slip-slop, regaled, in those days, the half-gentry of the vicinity. We live in an age of improvement—not too often meeting with (even) half-gentry now.

Small thought had the Doctor on matters like these. Leaving behind him the dense atmosphere which London spreads around itself so far, he found the air clear as he approached *L'Homme Vert*, and the sky enlightened by “the poetry of heaven,” as Byron *called* the stars, though he did not *prove* them so. The Doctor’s admiration of their beams was more prosaic; he felt grateful for any means of descrying the objects near him, and so gaining time, that he might screw his courage to the sticking place, whatever place that may be: for, veracious as he had ever been till this perilous night, he did intend sticking, or rather whipping, if *forced* to defend his money with his life.

Gaining the hill’s top, before him lay the long straight road that led to his own house. Shooter’s hill was dimly visible, and the light colour of the soil, contrasted with the dark sward on either side, enabled him to perceive two men on horseback, their faces towards London, stationed one on either side of his path.

“I have fallen among the Philistines!” inwardly ejaculated the Doctor, casting a wistful look at the inn; not a solitary candle denoted that any one was

still awake *there*. His heart beat violently as he passed between the horsemen, who, instantly turning their steeds, sidled up to the carriage. In a moment he recognised the pair he had previously overtaken.

“*Arcades ambo, id est*, blackguards, both,” he would have quoted, had the line been then written ; yet, although cold perspiration ran down his ample forehead, and excitement nearly choked his utterance, he lost not his self-commanding, ready-witted presence of mind.

“Well met again, sirs,” he began ; “you have not made up your minds to proceed, I see—wish you had, for I should have been happy in your company.”

“How far do you go to-night ?” asked the one called captain.

“Why, whether I get so far as Rochester, or not, must depend upon circumstances.”

“I see by your hat,” said the other, “that you belong to the clergy. Is your living in Kent ?”

“Yes, I get my living in Kent,” laughed the Doctor ; “I belong to St. Nicholas, who, I presume, is your patron saint, gentlemen.”

This innocent *ruse* was unintelligible to its hearers. Watson found that he must suit his conversation to his company, with so heavy a stake depending on the chance of the party coming to an agreeable understanding—that is, a *misunderstand-*

ing on one side, agreeably safe for the other. Accordingly he said, with much significance—

“This hat of mine stands me in good stead ; it *covers* more than you think ; and this old-fashioned chaise holds more than a new-fangled gig could. A man might manage to stow away a good many pieces of bandanas under the seat, when going to leave *cards* from Mechlin or Valenciennes, on ladies in town. D’ye happen to know a woman at Chatham who goes by the name of Mother Moonshine, gentlemen ?”

“I believe I’ve heard of such a person,” said the captain.

“Ah—well, if ever you should want any thing, either in the shape of dry goods, or a tub or two of white Nantz, I could introduce you to her.”

“Thank you kindly,” said one.

“You know the road thoroughly, it seems ?” added the other.

“Every bush on it, my masters ; but it isn’t what it used to be, when Slim Billy took his airings late. They weren’t good for his health in the end, though.”

“What, did you know poor Bill ?” asked the captain.

“Ay, that I did — and was with him to the last.”

“You be hanged ! at least Bill was.”

“Nay, sir, that’s as ugly a word for me to hear, as for you to use,” took up the Doctor, his heart set on conciliating his fellow travellers; “ay, even in *my* quiet *smug* way, those who don’t live slaves to the rules laid down by *the twelve*, can’t remember poor Bill’s end without queer feelings; but I was given leave to be with him at the very tree; we shall pass it presently, not far from the castle. ‘Doctor,’ says he to me —”

“Doctor!” shouted the henchman.

“To be sure, he knew *my* travelling name, as well as I knew he was called the Pride of the Green. ‘Doctor,’ says he, ‘if ever you meet any of my old cronies, tell ’em I died like a man; and as for the parson, you shall have it to swear that all I said here, from first to last, was to you; so, if any of the chaps are ever going to treat you uncivilly, you just cry—‘Onion sauce!’ they’ll know *my* pass-word.”

“None of *your* sauce, my fair trader,” said the captain, “that word won’t pass now, if it ever did; ’tis my belief, Slim Billy was game to the end, and humbugged you.”

“Lord, sir,” said the Doctor, “did *you* never hear *why* he chose that pass?”

“No; but if you can tell us, out with it.”

“You see, as our friend—*my* friend — William, I should say, gentlemen, drew the principal part of

his revenue, collected in his rents, on Shoulder of Mutton Green,* he thought onion sauce the fittest garnish for his favourite dish."

"The wag! that's just like him," laughed his former associates, and the Doctor, per force, laughed with them.

Brown George, with home in perspective, had stepped out manfully, or rather horsefully, so that our trio had made considerable way across the uninclosed portion of the heath, during their "colloquy divine." An isolated public-house, denominated "the Sun in the Sands," stood on the left side of the road, about midway from the commencement of Blackheath to the bottom of Shooter's Hill. This house, like the Bell at Hounslow, was, in those days, a chosen resort of "the Trojans," who took purses, either singly or running in couples. The inhabitants of the hostel were seldom "objective" to the garish eye of day; but from gloaming till dawn, at the service of all accredited customers. The belated wayfarer might have applied for meat or drink in vain, while knights of the post found jugs of smoking spicy wine, glasses of curious Cognac, and divers other comforts fit to drown the qualms of conscience, with all the ills which the breathers of night air "are heirs to."

* This green lies at the bottom of Shooter's Hill, on the Dover side.

“Ned,” said the captain, who rode on the Doctor’s left, “can’t you and I persuade our friend to stop and wet his whistle at the baiting crib?”

“In course; he won’t part company when he knows he’s got gentlemen of the right sort going down the road with him—eh, *Doctor*?”

To enter this house, where his person was known, not only as a clergyman but as a justice of peace, would have been fatal to my revered friend’s “*Cognito*.” Almost within sight of his home to be detected as an impostor by perhaps a host of desperadoes — at another sacrifice of truth he must, if possible, evade such a catastrophe.

“You’re very kind, my good friends,” said he, “but you know as well as I do, there are secrets in all trades. Sharp, the landlord, is a straight up, right down honest fellow in his way, but we had a bit of a tiff lately about a small parcel of Hollands, and I swore that I’d never set foot in his house again. However, don’t let that hinder *you*. I sha’n’t have got to the top of the hill before you have taken your swig, and come up with me.”

“No, deuce take it!” said the captain; “we’re not so unsociable as to drink without you — why, you’re one of us, I may say.”

“Proud of the compliment, sir; but if it’s all one to you, instead of *my* drinking *your* brandy

there, let *me* stand treat. I can promise ye as fine a bowl of bishop as ever wetted lips; fit drink for *me*, eh? Come on to the Bull."

"*They*'ll all be snoozing by this time," demurred Ned.

"Not *all*," said the Doctor, with an insinuating air; "for, between friends, and it goes no farther, I'm expected to-night. Old Dame Dudgeon is rather particular in her laces. I carried her a piece of black t'other day, which don't hit her fancy; she wants me to take it back, for Mother Moonshine to change it — so Dame's sitting up for me; and any friends of mine will be right welcome, therefore let Sharp go to bed, or to — any other place *you* like, gentlemen; but we're for the Bull."

They were now abreast of the Sun, yet, to his inexpressible relief, the others did not pull bridle.

A heavily laden waggon was seen advancing: drowning men catch at straws; my nearly exhausted *hero* derived consolation from the idea that no violence could be offered him while this machine was nigh, guarded by one man, if not more. The old horse put *his* best foot foremost. The strangers interchanged some words in a patois or slang, of which their auditor was ignorant, and the foot of the hill was gained!

The Doctor's brain reeled, his unwelcome companions had hitherto preserved the positions they

had originally assumed. His aim was now to get rid at least of the man at his right, the side on which his own house stood. Accordingly, when within a hundred yards of it, he said to him—

“Now, sir, if you will ride forward, and knock lustily at the Bull door, it will be open long before this sluggard of a horse of mine can drag me there.”

“A bright notion,” said Ned, and trotted off to obey the instructions.

This was one great point, but, scarcely was it achieved, when, to his unutterable satisfaction, our Doctor beheld a lantern at his wished-for gate, borne by his sturdy male factotum, followed by the powerful yard-dog, Neptune. Their master could scarcely breathe for agitation; every moment seemed an age, till he arrived at the open gate, when suddenly turning to his companion, he said—

“Thank you for your company, sir; but, as I am at home now, I can wish you a good night, with pleasure!”

The fellow, completely taken aback by these words, and the sight of the servant, the dog, and the lantern, galloped furiously after his second, who was, sure enough, thundering away at the Bull door.

“Ride, Ned, ride on, you fool!” yelled the captain. “We’re done—bit—floored!”

A moment, and he was joined by his brother in arms. The Doctor's servant, by his master's directions, followed their course to the top of the hill, and saw them rushing down its steep declivity, as if pursued by Justice herself mounted on Eclipse.

My excellent preceptor used to narrate this adventure most powerfully, dwelling with gratitude on his preservation; with modesty — nay, with some half-comic penitence — on the conduct and courage to which, as his *élèves* were not training for the church, they naturally and justly yielded their unqualified admiration.

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